

The  
RELIGIOUS MISSION  
OF THE  
IRISH PEOPLE

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THE  
RELIGIOUS MISSION  
OF THE  
IRISH PEOPLE  
AND  
CATHOLIC COLONIZATION.

BY  
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## PREFACE.



THE importance of the subject which I have ventured to discuss in the following pages demands fuller treatment and maturer thought than I have been able to devote to it; and the chief merit of the present treatise will doubtless be found to lie in the fact that it calls attention to questions which nearly concern all who love the Catholic Church and the Irish people.

The general truth which I have sought to develop is that the Irish Catholics are the most important element in the Church of this country, and that their present surroundings and occupations are, for the most

part, a hindrance to the fulfilment of the mission which God has given to them. It follows that all honest attempts to bring about a redistribution of our Catholic population are commendable. This is the object and aim of the Irish Catholic Colonization Association of the United States, which has also led me to write this little book.

The sketches which bear the title, "Amid Irish Scenes" and "English Rule in Ireland," were first published in the *Catholic World*, and give the impressions which I received during a brief tour through Ireland in the summer of 1876.



# THE IRISH PEOPLE

AND

## CATHOLIC COLONIZATION.

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### I.

#### THE CHURCH AND THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

A STRIKING characteristic of the present age is the tendency to isolate religion. Hitherto the view generally received as true has been that religion is related to the intellectual, moral, and social life of mankind in a manner not unlike that which air and sunshine hold to physical life. Its influence has been deemed essential to health, vigor, and progress; and hence it has passed as an axiom that religious faith should interpenetrate all the processes of life; that it should give direction to thought, form and efficacy to morality, sacredness and stability to social institutions. It has seemed to be the very atmosphere of hope and love; and by these man lives.

And this belief was but the expression of the historical experience of the world. All civilization has

a religious origin, and a priesthood presides at the birth of letters and proclaims the reign of law. Solon, Lycurgus, and Numa agree with Moses in resting the authority of the state upon a divine sanction. They all teach that a true human city must be a city of God ; and they could as soon have imagined its foundations built in the air as its laws having force without deriving their efficacy from the unseen lawgiver. Hence the universality and importance of the oath as a direct appeal to God to vindicate the cause of truth and justice ; hence the principle, received everywhere and in all ages, that religion, even when false, is the highest surety which it is possible to have of man's probity and truthfulness.

Faith is wider and deeper than knowledge, and reaches nearer to those abysmal fountains of being where the primal elements of character originate ; and we are, therefore, made what we are more by what we believe than by what we know. This is true of all genuine religious faith ; and it is, above all, true of Catholic faith.

The action of the Church upon the ideas, sentiments, public morals, and institutions of the Christian nations is the determining fact in their history. The rise and fall of empires, changes of dynasty, revolutions, and migrations of peoples are but the surface-movement of the ocean of humanity.

Deeper down, unseen, beyond the reach of plummet's sound, lie the fountains of life, which rise in the heart of man through faith and love. These are the waters of everlasting life, which give beauty, and freshness, and fragrance to the earth; and when they cease to flow the soul languishes, and things gross and rank in nature flourish.

The religion of Christ was first preached to a world in despair. The rich were without a heart and the poor without hope, and the very soul of man seemed to have died out of him. The history of the struggle of the Church with the empire which had turned the earth into a slaughter-house and a brothel is known. She threw her arms around the slave, the beggar, and the orphan; and this new love proved stronger than armies. She fought for the right to live amongst men, to teach them, and so to take part in shaping the destiny of the race. But the old order of things could not endure. The Jewish people were dispersed; the Temple was destroyed; and, after a lapse of time, the Roman Empire fell.

The foundations of society seemed to have given way and barbarism overspread the earth. "Amid the ruins of the greatest pride and the greatest strength that the world had known," says a Protestant writer, "the Church alone stood erect and strong. In days when men relied only on force

and violence, only to discover, time after time, that force alone could not give and secure power, the Church ruled by the word of persuasion, by example, by knowledge, by its higher view of life, by its obstinate hopes and visible beneficence, by its confidence in innocence, by its call to peace. The Church had faith in itself and in its mission when all other faith had broken down. It might be afflicted and troubled by the disasters of the time, but its work was never arrested by them nor its courage abated. It still offered shelter and relief among the confusion, even after war had broken into its sanctuaries and the sword had slaughtered its ministers ; it still persisted in holding out the light from heaven when the air was filled with storm and darkness.

“In the Latin cities of Italy and Gaul, while public spirit and the sense of duty were failing, and the civil chiefs of society shrank from the dangerous burdens and troubles of office, the Christian bishops, chosen by their people for qualities which men most respect, were, by virtue of these qualities, ready to accept the responsibilities which others gave up, and were taking informally the first place. It added to their influence that they were permanent in their office. . . . In times of strife the bishops were mediators, ambassadors, peacemakers. In times of imminent danger men looked to them to face the peril, to intercede for the doomed, to cross, with no pro-

tection but their sacred character, the path of the destroyer.

“With the terrible and inflexible barbarians, who were deaf to Roman envoys and contemptuous of Roman soldiers—with Ricimer, with Alaric, with Attila, with Genseric—the last word, the only word listened to, was that of a fearless bishop, like Pope Leo, asking nothing for himself, but, in the name of the Most High, that his people should be spared. Representatives, not of religion only and the claims of God, but of the moral order, of the rights of conscience and the sympathies of men, of the bonds and authority of human society, the Christian bishops were, when the barbarians became settlers in the empire, the only trusted guides of life.” \*

The urgency of the times forced the Church to take a leading part in the temporal affairs of men. Without doing this she could not have brought her spiritual powers into play. The rude and wild hordes among whom she was thrown knew no law but force and acknowledged no right that was inviolable. In the Church they encountered a moral power which stubbornly refused to yield to force and proclaimed the supremacy of right conduct. They were not only ignorant, but utterly averse to the restraint without which learning is impossible. The Church built schools and set her monks and nuns to teach. Their

\* *The Beginning of the Middle Ages*, by R. W. Church, p. 48.

hands were filled with blood and ravin. The Church threw her arms around the weak and defenceless and instituted the Christian chivalry to avenge their wrongs. They were idle and wayward, unwilling to conform to God's law that they who eat the bread of justice must labor. The Church built monasteries, and gathered around them agricultural colonies to clear the waste and drain the marsh. Her bishops counselled kings, sat in senates, withstood tyrants. They were seen by the thrones of Charlemagne, of Alfred, and of Otto the Great. They led the barons who wrested from kingly hands the Great Charter of the people's liberties; and so the Church was the nursing-mother of the modern nations.

Religion was recognized as a sovereign and independent power. The co-operation of Church and state was deemed indispensable to the general welfare, and Christian civilization was the outcome of their interaction. "The intellectual and moral development of Europe," says Guizot, "has been essentially theological. . . . Everything considered, this influence has been salutary. It has not only nourished and fertilized the progress of thought in Europe, but the system of doctrines and precepts in the name of which it gave character and impulse to the movement was altogether superior to anything the ancient world had ever known."\* "Religion

\* *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, leçon vi.

alone," says Hallam, "made a bridge, as it were, across the chaos, and has linked the two periods of ancient and modern civilization. . . . It is not, however, from religion simply that we have derived this advantage, but from religion as it was modified in the dark ages."\* It is needless to emphasize what is not only admitted, but even urged as an objection to the Church, by those who hold that the weakening and narrowing of religious influences is the mark of progress and the test of civilization.

The causes which have conspired to render human life worldly and profane by eliminating supernatural faith from the motives of action are so numerous and of such complex nature that anything like a satisfactory discussion of them is not to be thought of here. The multiplicity of religious sects, the rationalistic spirit underlying the Protestant heresy, the subjection of the Church to the state in all lands in which the Reformation prevailed, the rejection of the sacerdotal character, the suppression of the monastic orders, the preference of temporal to spiritual interests, the increasing disposition to esteem religion merely as a means to worldly and social ends, are all, whether causes or effects, or both, indicative of a decline of faith and of its power to influence the thoughts and actions of men. .

And since the human mind necessarily seeks to

\* *The Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 276.

form theories that will justify the opinions and motives which determine conduct, the practical denial of the virtue of religion was inevitably followed by theoretical scepticism, which began by exercising its destructive force upon what appeared to be minor and non-essential points, but which has now ended by declaring that faith and knowledge are incompatible, and that to affirm that religion is true is as meaningless as to say that light is square or round. But the spirit of denial, in order to hold this position, has been forced to go still further, and to affirm that truth itself has no absolute and unalterable meaning. If religion is merely the product of the imagination, then is all high hope, all noble aspiration, all belief in goodness, in purity, irrational, the blossoming of a fine frenzy. Life loses its color and freshness; the earth becomes flat and stale; the heavens grow dark, and yet no stars appear; the measureless ill overwhelms us, and there is no God to save.

The better and deeper minds who have accepted these principles are oppressed by a profound melancholy. The comfort even of cherished delusions is denied them. They close their eyes, and the fearful apparition still stares them in the face. They beheld the triumphal car of progress, preceded by the blazing torch of knowledge, moving round the earth to bless and enlighten mankind, and their



souls were filled with delight and they prophesied the golden age. The enthusiasm was momentary ; it was a delusion ; it grew out of a superstitious belief in the power of matter and machinery to consecrate and hallow human life. This superstition is dead. Those who look have seen that if man himself is not divine nothing can invest him with more than a transitory value.

You may fill the whole earth with his species ; house them, feed them, pamper them ; and in the end you have got only a fine cattle-pen. The soul of man protests against this indignity ; it is stifled in this gross air ; it yearns for God. Who shall redeem this age from the impotence of unbelief, from the paralysis of faith ? Who shall bring the people back to God and infinite hope ? To what fountain shall we go to drink deep enthusiasm and find again the lost relish of life ? All the schools of modern unbelief are powerless. They all despair of the soul. Their best consolation amounts to no more than this : there is no hope, no divine life ; but the wise do not rebel against fate. A pall hangs over the earth ; let us seek to forget it, and, in the meanwhile, do all we can to diminish human misery. Counsels of this kind may be well meant, but there is no inspiration in them. They savor of death, not of life. The future does not belong to those who accept this creed.

The sects of Protestantism have lost their hold upon the hearts and minds of men. What virtue is still left in them is not derived from themselves but from the instinctive clinging of the soul to God and its own high destiny. A diviner thought and life than that revealed in Christ is not conceivable ; and yet Christianity, as manifested in this chaotic sectarianism, is absurd and self-contradictory. "Let us look," says Mr. Mallock, "at England, Europe, and America, and consider the condition of the entire Protestant world. Religion, it is true, we shall still find in it ; but it is religion from which not only the supernatural element is disappearing, but in which the natural element is fast becoming nebulous. It is, indeed, growing, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says it is, into a religion of dreams. All its doctrines are growing vague as dreams, and, like dreams, their outlines are for ever changing." \*

Must we, then, despair of the Christian nations, and consequently of the human race ? The Church which received the faith from the lips of Christ and taught it to all the nations ; which overcame the Roman Empire and converted the barbarians ; which taught them letters and the arts of civilized life ; which saved Europe from Mohammedanism ; which preserved the classical writings ; which protected the weak, emancipated the slave, and withstood tyrants, still lives, and to this only representative of historical

\* *Is Life Worth Living?* p. 263.

Christianity the minds of those who think and believe in God turn now more and more.

A complete transformation of thought on this subject has taken place within a single generation. They are not yet old who can remember a time when it was held to be madness to maintain that the Catholic Church had a future in the modern world. Her enemies were too disdainful to be at pains to give arguments to show that her day was past. She was an anomaly and an anachronism, and it was contrary to the nature of things that she should continue to survive in a society which had outgrown all her methods and teachings. "Popery can build new chapels," said Carlyle forty years ago—"welcome to do so, to all lengths. Popery cannot come back any more than paganism can—which also still lingers in some countries. But, indeed, it is with these things as with the ebbing of the sea : for minutes you cannot tell how it is going ; look in half an hour where it is—look in half a century where your popehood is !"\* The half a century is nearly out : Mr. Carlyle is on the brink of the grave ; the pope is still vigorous. It is the old story told by St. Augustine fourteen hundred years ago. They say she is dying, he said, but I see her bury them day by day.

Protestantism half a century ago was in high favor and received the homage of all the litera-

\* *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, lect. iv.

tures. To-day the non-Christian writers of Europe and America, almost without exception, look upon Protestantism as intellectually unworthy even of serious refutation ; while the renascence of Catholicism, especially among the English-speaking peoples, has forced them to admit that there is in the Church some hidden and unsuspected principle of vitality. This new manifestation of Catholic life seems to inaugurate a new era in the history of Christ's religion ; and there are many reasons for thinking that it is to be an epoch of great spiritual power, even though not of external splendor.

The social structure of the Church is now consciously recognized in its completeness by Catholics throughout the world, and the danger of schism is thereby almost wholly removed. The definition of Papal Infallibility has added clearness and strength to the entire Catholic doctrinal system, so that a new heresy is even less to be feared than a new schism. The very wrongs which have been inflicted upon the pope have tended to awaken in the minds of all Catholics a deeper and fuller appreciation of the meaning and import of his office.

The temporary loss of his worldly kingdom has made us all realize that our common father, though, like his Divine Master, he should not have where to lay his head, has yet a home and a kingdom in every Christian conscience. The Italian prince has disap-

peared for the moment, that all the world may recognize Christ's Vicar, without home, without country, speaking to the non-national and catholic heart of man. Pastors and people gather about him with more eager devotion, and the whole Church resembles a disciplined and mobilized army.

The bishops are under his supreme and infallible guidance in a way hitherto hardly known. His freedom of action in their appointment and employment is asserting itself more and more. In a similar manner the priesthood has become more immediately and completely subject to episcopal authority, and the tendency of the secular clergy is to the regularity and discipline of a religious order, without sacrifice of the energy and enterprise which the free play of individual character ensures.

The very evils of which Catholics often complain may not be without some of those sweet uses which belong to adversity. The apostasy of the state from the Church has brought her nearer the great heart of the people. If kings and emperors no longer throw their purple mantle over her ministers, neither are they permitted to thrust the unworthy and the worldly-minded into holy places; and she is spared the homage of that base and low-thoughted crowd which adores whatever the world approves of.

As the masses, losing faith in God, lose also respect

for authority, and are therefore necessarily held more rudely in the grinding social mechanism, the Church is seen more and more to stand on the side of liberty and human dignity ; and thus, with the passing away of the real power of royalties and aristocracies, the course of events is inevitably tending to bring about greater sympathy between her and the people.

The mediæval political connections of the Church were accidental. The ignorant and lawless multitudes were little sensible to moral influences, and the salvation of society required the employment of force in matters in which it cannot be used without being abused. Hence the alliance between the Church and the ruling classes, and hence, too, the fatal conflicts between the spiritual and temporal powers during the Middle Ages.

That these two powers, in an ideal state, should work in harmony and be mutually helpful is, as a principle, indisputable ; but this truth in no way interferes with the free play of thought upon the facts of history, and we may dispassionately weigh the good and the evil which have sprung from such alliances as have hitherto been possible. At no time has the state given its support to the Church without demanding some sacrifice of her liberty ; and the abuses which have led to schism and heresy have risen in great part from the interference of kings and

princes in the appointment of bishops and priests to spiritual offices, while the chief obstacle to a reformation of morals has ever been the secret preference of temporal rulers for a lax and indifferent priesthood ; and thus the outward honor shown to the Church has generally been at the expense of her inward force, which rests upon morality.

Another evil consequence of the mediæval relations of Church and state was that the people in several countries confused the ministers of religion with their political tyrants, and visited both with a hatred alike intense and indiscriminating. A greater misfortune is hardly conceivable, for what little confidence is to be had in princes is dependent upon the people's love of the Church. "The friendship of the poor," said St. Bernard, "makes kings our friends."

The distrust of priests, so common amongst numbers of the lower classes in France and Italy, is of a political rather than a religious origin ; and when the fatal prejudice that there is a secret sympathy between the priest and the tyrant is once uprooted from the popular mind, the craving inborn in the heart of man for God and religion will bring them back to their long-lost mother. The people will not hold the Church responsible for wrongs which are inflicted by her enemies. They will at the same time perceive that there is no hope of redress and of a really brighter future for the laboring classes, except

through those teachings concerning the immortal worth and destiny of the human soul which can be efficaciously proclaimed only by the minister of religion.

And thus little by little the old ties will be reknit, and the faith which was first planted in the hearts of the poor will find there also its surest defence ; for it is in the order of God's special providence that the weak things of the world be chosen to confound the things which are mighty.

In this new phase of her life, most favorable to the cause of the Church will be the fact, which is now day by day receiving more general recognition, that she alone is the legitimate representative of Christianity. This will gradually bring over to her side the good-will and sympathy of all who still cherish faith in God and the soul ; for the evolution of a new religion is now confessedly impossible, and those who renounce Christianity will be fatally driven to atheism, which, as Leibnitz declared, is to be the last heresy.

But atheism has everywhere led to immorality of the lowest and most destructive kind. Greed and sensuality give a feverish impulse to human action which for a time takes the form of progress, but terminates in heartless selfishness and debauch ; whereas virtue is strength, and in the struggle for existence the good survive. In the new era



of which I am speaking the separation between those who believe in the soul and those who believe only in the senses will be more complete than at any time in the Church's history since the ages of the early martyrs, and the religious will be more and more the strong and the healthful.

As a result of the loss of faith unmistakable signs of rapid moral decay are perceptible both in Europe and America. The new paganism is upon us, and the materialistic creed of indulgence is the popular religion. It is idle to expect social regeneration from the action of governments. They have lost the sense of duty. It is vain to hope for an alliance between Church and state. If this were possible it is questionable whether, in the present age, it would be desirable.

All forms of political government have been discredited, so that no party is able long to hold power without falling into contempt; and as an alliance with the state would practically mean an alliance with this or that party, the public would make the ministers of religion responsible for the intrigues and infamies of politicians. There are things which cannot be touched without defilement, and in this category, in our day, politics must be placed—in so far, at least, as there is question of those whose mission is religious.

Nothing remains for the Church, it would seem,

but to permit the dead to bury their dead, and so with less hindrance to follow in the footsteps of Christ and to preach his Gospel to the poor. Government is hardly more Christian to-day than when our blessed Lord was born, and to do his work we must begin again, as he began, at the bottom, with the little ones—with those who have an humble and a pure heart, for of such is his kingdom. At the foot of the cross priest and people will meet once more to try the difficult ascent to Christ and God ; and slowly the Church will come forth from the isolation to which materialistic atheism seeks to condemn her, to mingle again with all the thoughts and loves of man.

## II.

## THE RELIGIOUS MISSION OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.

PEOPLES, like individuals, have special missions. In countless multitudes there are often but two or three lives that are indispensable. Without them the whole world, so far as we can see, would be quite other than it is; whereas the absence of millions from the crowd would be unimportant and hardly perceptible. One true man is worth a whole generation. When he appears a new quality of life diffuses itself. It is so with the race at large. A few groups only exercise a decisive influence on the world's history.

Intellectually we are still the disciples of Greece, and in the art of government the Romans are still our masters. Admirable progress has since been made, but we have built on the foundations which they laid. These are the most famous peoples: the noisy goddess has bruited their names in the ears of all the nations of the earth, and the passionate heart of youth is fired by the recital of their high achievements. But the world's best life to-day is derived through the Hebrew more than through Greek or Roman.

I put aside the question of natural and supernatural, and consider merely the instruments by which God's designs are wrought out. The truth which comes to us from Jerusalem is infinitely more important, even to our mere secular health and progress, than that which we receive from Athens. The Greek is the favorite child of Nature. He is many-sided and luminous, and the rays of his glory pierce the night of ages. The Jew is narrow and exclusive; he is hard and unlovely; he is a mark for the slow-moving finger of scorn; but he is God's witness to the supremacy of the moral law, and of him the Christ is born. "For salvation is from the Jews," both now and in the life to come. Doing is above knowing. God's commandments are the way of peace and health, and they who trample them under foot shall come to ruin. "A man's religion," says Carlyle, "is the chief fact with regard to him—a man's, or a nation of men's."

The highest mission, then, whether of the individual or of the race, is the religious. To know God is life everlasting. The knowledge of all else brings no such reward. Sem is happy, for he knows God; and Chanaan is a slave; and all the nations shall be blessed, not by the Greek or the Roman, but by the seed of Abraham.

Now, as in ancient times, the most important and really greatest people is the one which does most to

hallow God's name, to spread his kingdom among men, to make his will prevail. Let us not, like children, be led away by what strikes the eye and ear. The loudest names are not those of the world's truest benefactors. It seems, indeed, impossible that the highest merit should in its own day be recognized as such. Generations passed away before Shakspeare was seen to be the supreme poet; and so little is known of him that his existence has become almost mythical. If a man hit upon a mechanical invention or amass great wealth, his name is at once noised abroad through the whole world; but those who bring to light new principles of action, or with much labor and suffering lead their fellow-men to adopt beneficial measures, are unthought of and neglected. The New World was not named for its great discoverer, but for an adventurer; and so for three centuries the deep and wondrous work of the Church during the Middle Ages was forgotten or ignored by men who imagined the fountain-head of modern civilization was to be found in the narrow and quarrelsome spirit of Protestant sectarianism. God's judgments are not the world's, and the individuals and peoples whom he chooses are not those whom the world delights to honor.

Had some one suggested to Tacitus that the little flock of Christians in Rome, of whom he speaks with such contempt, were destined to exert a stronger and

more decisive influence upon the course of history than the empire of Cæsar, he would have laughed outright, staid Roman though he was. Nor would his opinion have been changed by an accurate knowledge of what manner of men the Christians were. Though a wise and thoughtful man, he would have failed to appreciate their virtues or to perceive that there was any connection between meekness, humility, chastity, the love of poverty, and the possession of a controlling power in directing the march of human affairs. The strong make history, and the Christians were weak ; the educated mould public opinion, and the Christians were ignorant ; the wealthy have a following, and the Christians were beggars. And, more than this, the Romans were the natural and prescriptive masters of the world, while this new faith was professed chiefly by Jews, a mean-spirited race, which a few cohorts were able to hold in subjection.

The real importance of a man or a people cannot be estimated by their worldly position. There is no more fatal error than to imagine that the future belongs to those who possess the present. To be great man must unite himself with a great cause. He must lose his life in something higher and holier than himself before he can find its fullest power ; and thus we may by experiment verify the truth that they who abandon all find all ; and hence those whom God destines to do a divine and immortal work are

taught wisdom by suffering and privation. Whom he loves he chastens, and whom he would use to great ends he sorely tries.

Now, the one constant and abiding cause, amid the rise and fall of empires, is religion, by which alone man can hope to be redeemed from the perishing elements which everywhere surround him ; and the one and only true religion is that of Christ, who has founded for ever the worship of God in spirit and in truth ; and Christ's religion is historically expressed and embodied in the Catholic Church. She is God's real and authentic kingdom in this world, and to be called to do a great work for her is to have a sublime and heavenly mission. Though guided and protected by the Holy Spirit, she, in her progress through time, is in many ways left to the care and devotion of her children. As she may be attacked by men, she may also be defended by them ; and her defenders know that though open to attack, yet is she invincible, a standing miracle and the world-wide example of the immutability of God's decrees. "When you see them fall," says Bossuet in the concluding sentence of his *Discourse on Universal History*, referring to the great empires of the past—"when you see them fall, nearly all of their own weight, while religion maintains itself by its inherent force, you will without difficulty perceive what solid grandeur is and where a wise man should rest his hope." It is

good to fight for a power which is holy and strong, which is able to wring victory from defeat, and which is immortal. To die in such a cause were a man's chief glory, and God's providence can prepare no higher destiny for a people than to make them the witnesses and apostles of the truth as revealed in Christ.

And this, as I take it, is the religious mission of the Irish people in the new era upon which the Catholic Church is now entering. Let us, before we direct our thoughts to the present and the future, cast a glance at the past. Nowhere else were the glad tidings borne by Christ's apostles to those who sat in the darkness of the shadow of death received with such delight as in Ireland. Her children are the exception to the general fact of which St. John speaks : " He came unto his own, and his own received him not." They bowed their necks to his sweet yoke, as though their whole past history had been but a training to this service. They made no martyrs, they stirred up no persecutions, but at once the fulness of the divine light shone upon them and they were a nation of believers. The sword was sheathed, churches and cloisters were built, and from hill and dale the voice of song and praise rose up to God as from another Paradise. Schools were founded, and during three centuries Ireland was the chief seat of learning in Europe. She was in very truth an island of saints



and doctors—the one bright and peaceful spot in a world covered by dark clouds and torn by storms of battle.

The foot of the Roman soldier had never been upon her fair bosom, and she escaped the wrath of the barbarous hordes that wreaked divine vengeance upon the mighty empire which, drunk with the blood of Christians, was now reeling to its fall. She was the ark of God, secure upon the wild waste of waters, above the wreck and ruin of a world. To her from all sides the noblest minds were turned—those who yearned for love and those who longed for knowledge. “From the high prow,” sang Columba, “I look over the sea, and great tears are in my gray eye when I turn to Erin—to Erin, where the songs of the birds are so sweet, and where the clerics sing like the birds ; where the young are so gentle and the old so wise.” And again : “Death in faultless Ireland were sweeter than life for aye in Albyn.”

But a holier and deeper love than that of country burned in the heart of Columba and his Irish monks, giving them no rest until they had borne to others the blessings which Christ’s apostle had brought to them. They in turn became the apostles of a great part of Europe ; carrying the light of the Gospel and of Christian culture not merely to the peoples of Celtic origin, but also to the Teutonic races. Irish monks founded fifteen monasteries in Bavaria, fifteen

in Helvetia, thirteen in Scotland, twelve in England, twelve in Armorica, ten in Alsatia, seven in Lorraine, and seven in France. They gave to Germany one hundred and fifty saints, many of whom were martyrs, forty-five to France, thirty to Belgium, thirteen to Italy, and eight to Norway and Iceland. And while her apostles went forth to every part of Europe to build up the Church, her schools at home were thrown open to the studious youth of the world. In that day when a scholar left his country he as a matter of course turned his face to Ireland. An Irishman founded the University of Paris, and Alfred, the founder of the English monarchy, received an Irish education. In the collegiate towns a special quarter of the city was set aside for the students; and when, at the sound of the early bell, says an ancient historian, two or three thousand of them poured out into the silent streets, making their way towards the lighted church to join in the *Matin* service, mingling, as they went or returned, the tongues of the Gael, the Cimbri, the Pict, the Saxon, and the Frank, or hailing and answering one another in the universal language of the Church of Rome, the angels of heaven must have contemplated with joy the union of so much piety with such industry.

This work of evangelization and civilization was continued until the Danes began to make piratical

incursions into Ireland, forcing the people to turn all their energies to the defence of their country and their religion. When, after three centuries of unceasing warfare, they had finally repelled the invader, breathing-time was hardly given them before the Norman foe attacked them, bringing other centuries of violence and bloodshed; and this bitter strife had not ceased when England's defection from the Church added the fanaticism of religious frenzy to the already existing causes of hatred, ushering in other ages of still more fearful suffering and woes ineffable.

I shall be excused for not attempting to describe what cannot even be imagined. Catholic Ireland, so far as this world was concerned, ceased to exist. She sank out of sight, forgotten by even the Catholic nations, left like Christ upon the cross, abandoned seemingly of God himself. Her children were bound by the triple chain of slavery, of ignorance, and of beggary, and no human eye could reach far enough into the future to see reason for hoping that a better day would ever dawn for them. Everything, on the contrary, seemed to indicate that they and their faith were to die away in the sacred island and to be buried in a common grave of ignominy and contempt. But three centuries of persecution, of starvation, of woes greater than those of the early Christians under pagan Rome, were borne

with cheerful fortitude and a courage that never grew faint-hearted. They were forgotten by even the Catholic nations, but they never forgot their Catholic faith. Rome herself seemed to have lost sight of them, but centuries of torture could not weaken their unconquerable devotion to the Church of Rome and the chair of Peter. In their inviolable attachment to the centre of Christian unity they stood alone in all northwestern Europe ; and at a time when religion, in Protestant and Catholic lands alike, was bound by state fetters, the Irish Catholics took up, in face of the civil government, the position held by the early Christians.

They appealed from Cæsar to God, and chose to suffer the worst that can be inflicted rather than sacrifice the liberty with which Christ has clothed the human conscience. Like the early believers in poverty, in suffering, and in the odium attached to their name, they were like them also in their freedom from human respect and in the heroic courage and certain faith which enabled them to give up all things to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour. The heavens seemed to break open to their view, and the world of spirit was as real for them as the world of sense. The chaste and high-minded are purified by the sufferings which degrade and harden coarser natures, and hence the Irish Catholic preserved a pure heart and an unbroken spirit in the midst of

trials that appear to be above the strength of man ; and the Church in Ireland, though unthought of and forgotten, was, more than any other, the counterpart of that of the apostles and early Christians.

The priest was a father, and as such loved and trusted by all the faithful ; and the clergy and the laity were united by the holiest ties of affection, which the course of ages has not weakened. Though the poverty of all was extreme, yet was there never wanting what was needed to maintain the decency of worship and to support the minister of religion. In the absence of all human comfort faith sweetened the bitterness of the present life and pointed to a better world. In the midst of enforced ignorance there was found the wisdom which comes of communion with God ; and so the power which was to carry the true faith to half the world grew strong in silence and gloom—*occulto velut arbor ævo*.

Meanwhile the bonds which for a thousand years had held England in communion with Christ's Vicar and the Catholic Church were breaking—more slowly, indeed, than in other lands where Protestantism was making headway, but more effectually also. It has always appeared to me that the English people became Protestant without knowing it and by a kind of fatality. The preachers of Protestantism wore a Catholic mask, and questions of patriotism and religion were so inextric-

cably confused that the masses were finally led into schism and heresy, thinking all the while that they were only upholding their rights as Englishmen. The race that covered the soil of England with cathedrals, cloisters, and monastic schools was religious and Catholic, and, were it not for a fatality which is one of the mysteries of God's providence, it would have remained so.

In point of fact, however, the separation of England from the Church was more complete than that of any other Protestant nation whose influence is important. In France, in Austria, in Poland, in Bavaria, and in Belgium the Catholic cause was victorious, while considerable portions of Germany and Holland remained true to the old faith; and the rights of the Catholic populations on the Continent of Europe were guaranteed by the treaty of Westphalia in the middle of the seventeenth century. In England, on the contrary, the Catholic Church may be said to have altogether ceased to exist, and nothing was left undone to make its return for ever impossible. For two centuries the English Government did all that human power could do to make it impossible for any one to be a Catholic and to be free; to be a Catholic and to be educated; to be a Catholic and to have wealth, or office, or influence.

The few families who remained faithful dwelt in seclusion and retirement, scarcely daring to pray in

secret, much less to speak out openly in defence of their religion. In this way it came to pass that the whole thought and life of England grew to be anti-Catholic. The laws, the education, the literature, and the very language of Englishmen became Protestant. The entire history of the Church was perverted with impunity, for there was not in the wide world a Catholic who could write good English ; and so what has been called the Protestant *tradition* was received as unquestionable, and came little by little to be the controlling factor in English public opinion. As the Government placed Catholics outside the pale of the law, this tradition placed the Church outside the sphere of free inquiry. It was assumed as a first principle that nothing could be said in her defence ; that she was wholly evil and the creature of the evil one ; that during the entire Middle Age the whole world was drowned, as the Homilies express it, in the pit of damnable idolatry. And these notions were applied to Catholics themselves in the same unreasoning manner.

English Protestants took it for granted that Catholics were not merely slaves and dupes, but positively fiendish, eager to lie, cheat, steal, murder, or commit any other crime, in the firm persuasion that they were thereby doing a service to God. And if appearances were in opposition to this view, the fact

was explained by the deep cunning and preternatural hypocrisy which were held to be a kind of second nature with Catholics. Priests and nuns are consecrated to a life of special and difficult virtue ; and the explanation given by the Protestant tradition was that this profession was but meant as a cloak to hide the most criminal and licentious conduct. This was the view alike of the learned and the ignorant. It furnished a common intellectual basis for the poet, the historian, the philosopher, and the divine, and it was as a compass to the sort of thinking of which the crowd is capable.

The tradition of which I am speaking was unauthentic and undisputed ; and when we consider the traits of character which distinguish the English, we shall readily understand that it was, of itself, an almost insuperable obstacle to the re-introduction of Catholicism amongst them.\* Of all men the Englishman, both by nature and by his intense and insular nationalism, is the most self-sufficient. In his eyes whatever is English is right. He makes himself the measure of all things ; and things which cannot be so measured he ignores. His government and his religion are the best, for the very simple reason that they are his. He is not a metaphysician, cares nothing for abstract principles and theories, and is as much lacking in mental flexibility

\* See Cardinal Newman's *Present Position of Catholics in England*, p. 57.



as in the power to sympathize with those who do not think and feel like himself. As he finds the manners and customs of foreigners ridiculous, so he finds their opinions false or absurd. He cares, in fact, little or nothing about people who are not English, and takes the trouble to find fault with them only when they come between the wind and his gentility. To say that certain principles of action are found to work well in other countries is to be guilty of an impertinent suggestion. What are other countries to him that he should model his conduct upon their preposterous notions? He looks abroad only to learn to appreciate more thoroughly the divine privilege of being an Englishman. As Socrates thanked the gods each morning that he had not been born a slave or a woman, so his heart overflows with gratitude as he recalls to mind, day by day, that—

“ This sceptred isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress, built by Nature for herself,”

is his native land. He cares less about foreign religions even than about foreign literature or politics. His religion is an Anglican or English religion; it is consequently a true and holy religion.

It is not conceivable that God should have intended that an Englishman should have to go to foreigners

to be taught the true faith. He does not seek to bring his religion into harmony with abstract principles, or even with the facts of history. As he governs by a system of checks and balances, so his faith is a compromise and his creed admits of contradictory interpretations. To tell him that he is in conflict with historical Christianity is to speak an idle word. Has he not his own Christianity, his English religion, and can there be any other for him? To suggest that his theory of Christianity is inconsistent with itself is not an objection. He is little concerned about consistent theories; he wants a religion that suits Englishmen. Now, it is plain that this temper of mind was most favorable to the lodgment of the anti-Catholic prejudices of which I have spoken. The Catholic Church did not profess to be exclusively or specially English; and it was therefore easy, once England had been separated from her communion, to bring the popular mind to look upon her as a foreign institution, to be hated at first for her pretensions to authority over Englishmen, and finally to be completely ignored. In this way the Catholic Church fell under the ban which strikes whatever is un-English; and the people were prepared to believe without inquiry or hesitation all the evil that could be said of her. They did not study her history, for they study no foreign history; they did not examine into the evidences of the truth of her teaching, for it was, on the

face of the matter, absurd to suppose that any such evidences existed, and Englishmen are by nature averse to abstract investigations and the metaphysics of theology.

The enemies of the Church, therefore, had their own way and nothing to fear ; and as this state of things continued for more than two centuries, the result could not be doubtful. Gradually even educated Englishmen lost the power of looking at Catholicism except through the medium of the Protestant tradition ; the Church sank out of their sight and was finally buried in oblivion. The enemies of the blessed Saviour were not more secure when they saw him placed in the tomb than Protestant England, beholding the utter contempt and hopeless impotence into which Catholicism had fallen. The hand of a master has sketched the ruins as he saw them in the early part of the present century : "The Roman Catholics—not a sect, not even an interest as men conceived of it ; not a body, however small, representative of the great communion abroad ; but a mere handful of individuals, who might be counted like the pebbles and *detritus* of the great deluge, and who, forsooth, merely happened to retain a creed which in its day, indeed, was the profession of a Church. Here a set of poor Irishmen, coming and going at harvest-time, or a colony of them lodged in a miserable quarter of the vast metropolis. There,

perhaps, an elderly person seen walking in the streets, grave, and solitary, and strange, though noble in bearing and said to be of good family, and a 'Roman Catholic.' An old-fashioned house of gloomy appearance, closed in with high walls, with an iron gate and yews, and the report attaching to it that 'Roman Catholics' lived there; but who they were or what they did, or what was meant by calling them Roman Catholics, no one could tell—though it had an unpleasant sound and told of form and superstition. . . . Such was about the sort of knowledge possessed of Christianity by the heathen of old time who persecuted its adherents from the face of the earth, and then called them a *gens lucifuga*—a people who shunned the light of day. Such were Catholics in England, found in corners, and alleys, and cellars, and the house-tops, or in the recesses of the country; cut off from the populous world around them, and dimly seen, as if through a mist, or in twilight as ghosts flitting to and fro, by the high Protestants, the lords of the earth." \* In Scotland Catholicism had perished more completely even than in England. Here and there amid the rugged fastnesses of the Highlands a clan remained true to the old faith, but it was thereby shut out from all communion with the civilized world. The most horrible and bloody massacre in the history of Christian nations was that of the

\* Newman, *Occasional Sermons*.

Catholic Macdonalds of Glencoe during the reign of William III.; and yet this tragedy of unparalleled treachery and cruelty called forth scarcely a feeble protest, so completely had Catholics been placed outside the pale of humanity. And for all practical purposes Ireland was as much under the dominion of Protestantism as England or Scotland. The land was owned by Protestants, the laws were made and executed by Protestants, all the liberal professions were in the hands of Protestants, and the masses of the people, who had remained true to the Church, were reduced to such a pitiful and degraded condition that it was safe to ignore their very existence. To understand the state of Ireland under the full sway of the Protestant ascendancy one should study the writings of Swift. His deep-seated anger, his scorn and indignation, his hatred of those in power, his loathing of the crowd, his preference of Yahoos to men, his fearful and most sincere misanthropy, ending in madness and despair, will seem strange only to those who know nothing of the Ireland in which he lived.

Whoever at the beginning of the present century had considered the state of religion in Great Britain and Ireland would have had no difficulty in pronouncing at least upon one point. He would have felt certain that, whatever might come to pass, there was beyond all question no future for Catholi-

cism in those islands. And if no future there, then no future in North America, in Australia, in half the world. And so it seemed that the English-speaking portion of the human race, whose share in moulding the future of the world is to counterbalance that of all others, was irrevocably dedicated to the cause of Protestantism. A struggle, even the feeblest, between it and the old faith was not deemed possible. The Catholic Church had been tumbled down by this sturdy race, like some ancient fortress which in its day had been strong, but was now only in the way. The ruin was complete ; and in the modern world men do not rebuild ruins. Condemnation had been passed upon it, and the sentence was without appeal.

The century is not near its close, and yet since its opening the cause of Catholicism has undergone a transformation little less than marvellous in the whole English-speaking world. The prudent do not speak a boastful word, and self-complacency is not a Christian virtue. There is cause enough yet for anxiety, for humility, for doubt. Our victory is in no way assured ; but the Lord hath regarded our lowliness and hath wrought great things upon us. There are few among us who are great, who are noble, who are learned, who are powerful, but, such as we are, we stand in the open light of day and on God's battlefield in Ireland, in England, in Scotland, in America, in Australia, in every part of the wide earth where the

English language is spoken ; and we are in all probability to-day the greatest and most living religious fact in all these lands, and so recognized to be by those who are able to interpret without passion or prejudice the signs of the times.

One thing at least is henceforth indubitable—that Protestantism is not to retain undisputed possession of the English-speaking races. “The Catholic Church in Ireland and in England has at this day,” says Cardinal Manning, “a solid unity of mutual co-operation such as it never had since Armagh and Canterbury were founded. In the Vatican Council no saint had so many mitred sons as St. Patrick ; and—wonderful are the ways of God !—no single power on earth had there a hierarchy so numerous, gathered from the ends of the earth, as our own. These things are not without a future.”

The Catholics of Great Britain entered the House of Parliament with O’Connell. They had not wholly perished in the land of bondage, in the sea of blood, in the weary desert of starvation. There was a remnant and there was hope, and now there was liberty too, which is the life and soul of hope. The British Parliament was a kind of telephone which carried the voice of their grievances to the ends of the earth ; and the simple story of their wrongs, and the unconquerable fortitude with which they had been borne, moved their persecutors to pity

and then to admire, while they themselves were inspired with greater zeal and courage by the fuller knowledge of their little less than miraculous preservation. Again was it possible, praised be God ! to be a Catholic in the British Empire without forfeiting the common rights of man. No longer was it necessary to offer up the Holy Sacrifice in secret hiding-places, in bogs and ravines, in retired country-houses, in lanes and alleys, where the faithful gathered in fear to adore God. The thatch-roofed chapels on the bleak moor or barren hillside, where souls as pure and heroic as ever prayed in the Catacombs had for generations placed their cause at the feet of the Crucified, knowing that he has power to save, were abandoned, and spires lifting the cross to heaven began again to rise on every side. Schools were built and seminaries founded. Bishops reappeared in the ancient sees ; the hierarchy was reconstituted, parishes organized ; synods were held ; the past returned, and what had been dead lived again. A Catholic now might go to school, might learn to speak and write English, and so raise at least a feeble voice against the calumnies of centuries. The liberal professions were again thrown open to him, and again it was lawful for a Catholic not to be a beggar. The triple chain of slavery, of ignorance, and of poverty, eaten by the rust of ages, was at last broken.

The year 1829 was for the Catholics of Great



Britain and Ireland what the victory of Constantine at the Milvian Bridge had been for the early Christians. In 1840 Gregory XVI. doubled the number of vicars-apostolic in England, and in 1850 Pius IX. created the hierarchy with an archbishop and twelve bishops. During the last half-century the number of priests in England and Wales has increased more than fourfold, while the number of churches has been nearly trebled. The movement towards the Church which set in from the bosom of Anglicanism after the act of Emancipation, and which still continues, has given to the cause of Catholicism many of its ablest defenders ; and as it was not possible to ascribe this change of faith to motives of self-interest, the writings of these converts have been a powerful instrument to force the Catholic presentment of Christianity upon the attention of a public by which it had so long been completely ignored. In a word, from whatever point of view we consider the present state of Catholicism in the British Empire, the contrast with what it was half a century ago is in every way so surprising that, if we looked no further, it would seem hardly possible to be too sanguine as to its future prospects.

And if we turn to our own country we shall be able to note a Catholic progress which, taken all in all, is of even greater promise. The thirteen American colonies which a hundred years

ago declared their independence of the power by which they had been founded were intensely and thoroughly Protestant. In hatred of the Church and contempt for Catholics they were not excelled by the mother-country. The first settlers had been for the most part ultra-Protestant, regarding the remnants of popery still found in the Church of England as an abomination. While their religious opinions were more thoroughly anti-Catholic than those of the Anglicans, they at the same time received with implicit faith and in all its hideousness the English Protestant tradition concerning Catholicism. One of the thirteen colonies had indeed been founded by Catholics, who in their legislative enactments, as in their lives, had shown a remarkable and sincere spirit of toleration; but so intense was the bigotry of the Protestants by whom they were surrounded, and to some of whom they had given asylum, that in a few years they were themselves deprived of the rights and liberties which they had been anxious to secure to all Christians.

At the breaking out of the war of independence there were not more than twenty-five thousand Catholics in a population of three millions; and this handful of believers were sunk in a life of religious ignorance and indifference. They had no bishop, they had no schools, they had no religious houses, and the few priests who were scattered among

them generally lived upon their own lands or with their kinsfolk, cowed by the fearful force of Protestant prejudice. The colony founded by Lord Baltimore had not spread beyond the corner of Maryland where the pilgrims first landed, and their descendants were regarded now as a peculiar people, who had survived from a past age and an effete civilization. There was no contagion in their faith, which seemed at best to nourish but a dying flame. They had not, like the Catholics of England and Ireland, a past history filled with glorious names and hallowed memories. Great cathedrals reared by Catholic hands did not look down upon them to speak of the faith and charity of their fathers, and sad ruins did not plead with them to rebuild the desecrated sanctuary of God. They had lost sight of Europe, and found themselves in a new world with the old faith, and yet without visible evidence or almost any knowledge of the mighty things which it had wrought in the past.

And on all sides they were thrown in contact with a people filled with a high and free spirit, and who were persuaded that Protestantism was the cause of all the good that was in the world. It at least had triumphed over the old faith among the English-speaking races, which, with tireless energy and unconquerable will, were extending their power and institutions throughout the earth. What hope was there that a few families in a remote pro-

vince would remain faithful to a creed which had been rejected by the whole race of which they were sprung? Or if their self-respect should enable them to remain true so long as the pressure of penal legislation weighed upon them, would not the softening influence of liberty and social intercourse with the believers in the popular and triumphant religion of a new era imperceptibly weaken the hold of Catholicism upon them? This was the more probable since they were gentle and kind-hearted, and of an easy way of life, and wholly free from fanaticism.

An observer who a hundred years ago should have considered the religious condition of this country could have discovered no sign whatever that might have led him to suppose that the faith of this little body of Catholics was to have a future in the American republic; whereas now there are many reasons for thinking that no other religion is so sure of a future here as the Catholic. The Church in the United States is no longer confined to three or four counties of a single State. It is co-extensive with the country, embracing North and South, East and West. Its members are counted by millions, its priests and sacred edifices by thousands. Its archbishops and bishops rule over eleven metropolitan and fifty-four suffragan sees. Its religious homes for men and women, its colleges, académies, and schools, are found in every

part of the Union. It has acquired the right of domicil ; it has become a part of the nation's life. It is a great and public fact which men cannot, if they would, ignore.

It is our only historic religion. Outside its fold there are views and opinions, but here is an organism which shoots its roots deep into the hidden strata of buried ages. The Church leads us by the hand along the silent ways of the mystic past. She was in Jerusalem when Stephen was stoned ; she was on Mars' Hill with Paul ; she was with Peter on the Vatican. She lived in the Catacombs ; she saw Constantine triumph ; she saw Rome fall. She spoke with our forefathers when they were clad in the skins of wild beasts, when they jabbered in unintelligible jargon. She drained the marsh and felled the forest ; built the great cathedrals and founded universities. She has seen and known "cities of men, and manners, climates, councils, governments." She has known the worst, and therefore trusts her destiny and proclaims without fear her heavenly mission. She is certain of herself. She has definite aims and fixed purposes. It is surely something to have come down the long centuries and still to have faith, and hope, and love ; to have a venerable past and yet not despair of the future. And since the Church has already proven that she is able to live in this democratic land, will

not the fact that she has lived in all the centuries since Christ was born, and in many climes and amongst many peoples, in deserts and in catacombs, in tents of savages and in palaces of kings, throw the mystery and splendor as of the setting sun over her new rising in this other world ?

I shall say nothing of the British Provinces of America or of Australia, or of those other parts of the earth which the power of England has rendered tributary to her glory and wealth. It is enough to know that she has been able to find no corner of the earth, however remote or difficult of access, whither the Catholic Church has not followed her.

Raro antecedentem scelestum  
Deseruit pede pœna claudo.

The general fact, moreover, is abundantly evident. The Catholic Church has in the last hundred years risen to new life in the whole English-speaking world, and to all appearances its permanent existence there is assured. I am far from believing that England or the United States is going to become Catholic. We are not living in an age when any nation, as such, will become or remain Catholic ; but what I mean to affirm is that the actual condition of Catholicism in Great Britain and Ireland, in the United States, in Canada and in Australia, is of such a character that the conclusion that it is destined to remain a great

and abiding fact in all these countries is inevitable. The difficulties which it has had to overcome in order to secure its present position are sufficient evidences of its inherent strength and vitality, while the increasing feebleness of Protestant sectarianism shows that there is no other religious faith from which serious rivalry can be expected. And in the end men will cling to some faith, so that the contest with infidelity must finally result in the victory of Christianity.

If now we turn to explain this rebirth of Catholicism amongst the English-speaking peoples, we must at once admit that the Irish race is the providential instrument through which God has wrought this marvellous revival. As in another age men spoke of the *gesta Dei per Francos*, so may we now speak of the *gesta Dei per Hibernos*. Were it not for Ireland Catholicism would to-day be feeble and non-progressive in England, America, and Australia. Nor is the force of this affirmation weakened by the weight and significance which must be given to what the converts in England, and the Germans and the French in the United States, have done for the Church. The Irish have made the work of the converts possible and effective, and they have given to Catholicism in this country a vigor and cohesiveness which enable it to assimilate the most heterogeneous elements, and without which it is not at all certain that the vast majo-



rity of Catholics emigrating hither from other lands would not have been lost to the Church. "No other people," to repeat what I have elsewhere written, "could have done for the Catholic faith in the United States what the Irish people have done. Their unalterable attachment to their priests ; their deep Catholic instincts, which no combination of circumstances has ever been able to bring into conflict with their love of country ; the unworldly and spiritual temper of the national character ; their indifference to ridicule and contempt, and their unfailing generosity, all fitted them for the work which was to be done, and enabled them, in spite of the strong prejudices against their race which Americans have inherited from England, to accomplish what would not have been accomplished by Italian, French, or German Catholics." \* No other people had received the same providential training for this work ; of no other people had God required such proofs of love.

Like the children of Israel, the Irish had borne the yoke of bondage ; had been rescued from the sea of blood, and had wandered for weary years in the desert without home, without country ; cut off from all contact with other peoples, and saved from despair and death only by the presence of the pillar of fire, which is God's Catholic Church. Their very language had died away upon their lips, and they began to speak

\* *Essays and Reviews.*



the tongue of the persecutor whom they were to evangelize. Nothing was left them but faith and virtue, that they might fully realize that these are the best gifts of God and are enough. They found Christ's Church, which was to be their only hope, poor and lowly as the Infant Saviour in the stable of Bethlehem; but kings and wise men brought no offerings of gold, incense, and myrrh. The heavenly bride was left alone with the priest and the people, despised, unthought of, without honor, without comeliness, like the Divine Master on the cross, that so the poor might gather about her as in the early ages and learn to know her hidden beauty. There were no mystic ceremonies; there was no rich altar; there was no stately cathedral; there was no pomp and splendor of worship—none of all those things through which alone, it is thought, the Church holds sway over the multitude; and yet they knelt to her with hearts of purest love, nor cared to have a home or a country, if she were not there.

## III.

## THE COUNTRY.

HUMAN character is shaped by its surroundings. This is the meaning of the proverb that we are creatures of circumstance. God's grace even works through the natural medium in which the soul lives, and its action is hindered by untoward conditions, so that it is held to be a miracle of grace if one remain pure amid evil associations. Every special mode of life creates a separate type of character, and the virtues and vices of races and nations are traceable in a great degree to the surroundings in which they have lived and labored.

When we compare Christian with pagan civilization the most obvious fact which meets our view is a change in the distribution of population. In Greece and Rome the owners of the soil were collected together in cities. Their history is the history of cities and towns. There was no country population, except the slaves whom the proprietors kept upon the land. "Rome," says Guizot, "has left us nothing but monuments impressed with the municipal stamp and intended for populations amassed upon a single spot. From whatever point of view you consider the Ro-

man world, you find this almost exclusive preponderance of cities and the social non-existence of the country." \* But when the new society was constituted by the help of the Catholic Church upon the ruins of the great pagan empire, the social preponderance passed from the city to the country ; and little by little the soil of Europe was covered with castle and cloister and the thatch-roofed cottage of the peasant.

The family became the social unit, and its purity and typical character were preserved and developed by isolation from the corrupt mass of mankind, and by the healthful atmosphere of its natural surroundings. This was an immense advance, and its influence upon the course of Christian history has been incalculable. To make the cultivation of the soil honorable was a return to the ways of God, who had destined man, even before his fall, to till the earth, and who, after the original sin, had made this destiny a part of the redeeming punishment. And this was the life of the chosen people. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were shepherds and husbandmen, and when their descendants had been made the slaves of industry, hewers of wood and drawers of water, they were led out of bondage, by the divine command, into the land of promise, where all, from the chief of the tribe of Juda to the least of the

\* *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, p. 45.

house of Benjamin, returned to the agricultural and pastoral life of their fathers. The land was divided among the tribes and families, with the provision that no perpetual alienation should ever take place, and at the end of every fifty years all lands reverted to the original owners or their descendants. Every man sat beneath his own fig-tree and ate the fruit of his own vine. God did not promise silver and gold and precious stones, but he promised seasonable rains, abundant harvests, ripe fruits, numerous flocks, quiet sleep, safety and peace.

These were the temporal blessings which the children of Israel were taught to expect from his providence. They were the farmers of God, the most purely agricultural people that has ever existed. Even their religion bore the impress of husbandry. The sacrificial offerings were the first-fruits of the flocks and the fields. The Passover was celebrated when the ears of corn began to show. The feast of Pentecost pointed to the ripened grain, and the feast of Tabernacles announced the garnered harvest. Whenever the Bible speaks of labor, of business, of possessions, it speaks of the land and its tillage. How full it is of imagery drawn from the golden grain, from vineyard and meadow, from rain and sunshine, from the melting snow and the flowing stream! On every side we hear the lowing of oxen and the bleating of sheep. The King is a shepherd,

and the people are his flock. King Saul was driving his team afield when news was brought him that the city of Jabes was in danger; David was watching sheep when Samuel sent for him to anoint him king; Eliseus was following one of his father's twelve ploughs when he was called to prophesy. A shepherd might become a king or a prophet, and the king and the prophet were shepherds. All were "sons of Abraham, and never in bondage to any man." They were, as Moses had said, a people of kings and priests, ennobled and sanctified by the possession of the soil. "You shall love labor," said the holy writings, "and husbandry created by the Most High God"—*Non oderis laboriosa opera et rusticationem creatam ab Altissimo*.

This was the divine political economy; these were the teachings of God; and they are the teachings also of the best human reason. To dwell upon the land and to eat the bread of toil is man's natural condition. "This country life," says Cicero, "teaches economy, industry, and justice"; and a modern thinker has added that agriculture is the mother of good sense. "The strongest men and the bravest soldiers," said Cato, "are farmers' sons; and those who are occupied with the cares of husbandry are freest from evil designs." It is good to dwell in the presence of nature; to see the sun rise and set; to be over-canopied by the blue heaven with its fleecy

clouds ; to see the flowers bloom and the green fruit swell to melting pulp ; to be awakened by songs of birds and lowing of cattle ; to breathe fresh air blown from meadows and waving fields of corn ; to hear the rain that makes the earth green and glad ; to watch the snowflakes that, falling swift and noiseless as the foot of time, enfold it in its winding-sheet. For the young, above all, the earth, with its dower of river, wood, and vale, is God's university. It never grows old, but is re-created for each new-born generation, to fill the heart of the human child with reverence, wonder, awe, delight, ecstasy. The love of nature is a sacred element of human feeling, and if this sentiment is not awakened in the child I see not how the man shall be full-grown and complete. "The dweller in the country," says St. Chrysostom, "has a higher enjoyment than the rich inhabitant of the city. To him belong the beauty of the heavens, the splendors of the light, the purity of the air, the sweetness of quiet sleep. You shall find in this life true contentment and security, good name and health, and the fewest dangers to the soul. This people dwells in peace, leading a modest and venerable life." And if we go to the highest authority, in heaven and on earth, we shall learn the same lesson. The birth of Christ was announced first not to kings, or philosophers, or men of wealth, but to shepherds watching beside their flocks on the hills around Bethlehem. Herod's

palace was not far off ; but there song, and dance, and revelry went on, and no messenger from heaven heralded the glad tidings to the dwellers in houses of kings, who are clothed in soft garments. And Christ himself, setting the supreme example to the conduct and thoughts of men, spent nearly his whole life in the fields, looking with a tenderness almost akin to human love upon the grazing flocks, the whitening harvest, the budding trees, the lilies, and the birds, and the grass, which to-day is green and to-morrow is cast into the oven. He walks by the sea-shore, he goes up into the mountain, he withdraws into the desert, but he will not so much as sleep within the walls of Jerusalem. The noise and stir of the crowded city jar upon the sweetness and serenity which mark all his thoughts and ways. An air of Godlike simplicity breathes round him, and this is not the atmosphere of great cities. The beatitudes were spoken while he sat upon the hillside, overlooking the landscape that served as a background to the listening multitudes ; and to understand the peace and delight of the life which they trace out one should dwell in the open country and breathe the pure air of heaven. In the city neither the rich nor the poor can realize the infinite charm of the Christian ideal. The heart is troubled there, and God is not in the whirlwind of human passion. "To watch the corn grow and the blossoms set," says Ruskin ; "to draw

hard breath over ploughshare or spade ; to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray—these are the things that make men happy ; they have always had the power of doing this ; they never will have power to do more. The world's prosperity or adversity depends upon our knowing and teaching these few things ; but upon iron, or glass, or electricity, or steam in no wise."

What deep Christian instinct was there not in the love of the ancient monks for nature and solitude—*sedebit solitarius et tacebit!* "I approve," said St. Ivo, in the twelfth century, "the life of those men for whom a city is but a prison, who find their paradise in solitude, who live there by the labor of their hands, or who seek to renew their souls by the sweetness of a life of contemplation—men who drink with the lips of their heart at the fountain of life." Montalembert has called attention to the beautiful names which symbolize the natural scenery that surrounded the mediæval monasteries, and has quoted in this connection Alcuin's touching adieu to his cloister when called to the court of Charlemagne. "O my cell," cried he, "sweet and well-beloved home, adieu for ever ! I shall see no more the woods which enfold thee with their interlacing branches and flowery verdure, nor thy fields full of wholesome and aromatic herbs, nor thy streams of fish, nor thy orchards, nor thy gardens where the



lily mingles with the rose. I shall hear no more the birds who, like ourselves, sing matins and, in their way, praise the Lord of all ; nor those words of sweet and holy wisdom which sound in the same breath as the praises of the Most High from lips and hearts always peaceful."

The monks who converted the barbarians and preserved the writings of the Greeks and Romans were the pioneer farmers of Christendom. "They carried," says Montalembert, "labor, fertility, human strength and intelligence into those solitudes which till then had been abandoned to wild beasts and to the disorder of spontaneous vegetation." They felled the forest, they drained the marsh, they planted fruit-trees and the vine, they domesticated the animals which in the chaos of barbarian invasions had gone back to the savage state. There was Telio, a British monk, who introduced the apple-tree into Armorica. There was St. Fiacre, an Irish monk, who cleared the forest around Meaux, and who is still the patron saint of the French gardener ; and there was Theodulph, born of an illustrious family in Aquitaine, who, having become a monk, drove his yoke of oxen in the plough for twenty-two years. After these twenty-two years of ploughing he was elected abbot. "Then," says Montalembert, "the inhabitants of the nearest village took his plough and hung it up in their church as a relic.

It was so, in fact—a noble and holy relic of one of those lives of perpetual labor and superhuman virtue whose example has exercised a more fruitful and lasting influence than that of the proudest conquerors. It seems to me that we should all contemplate with emotion, if it still existed, that monk's plough, doubly sacred by religion and by labor, by history and by virtue. For myself, I feel that I should kiss it as willingly as the sword of Charlemagne or the pen of Bossuet." The plough and the cross, he adds, formed the ensign and emblazonry of the entire history of the monks during these early ages—*cruce et aratro!* And there was Ermenfried, a nobleman of the court of King Clotaire II., who, having become a monk, was accustomed to kiss with tender respect the hard hands of the ploughmen. "I have surveyed the annals of all nations, ancient and modern," says the writer whom I have just quoted, "but I have found nothing which has moved me more, or better explained the true causes of the victory of Christianity over the ancient world, than the image of this German, this son of the victors of Rome and conquerors of Gaul, become a monk and kissing before the altar of Christ the hard hand of the Gaulish husbandmen in that forgotten corner of Jura, without even suspecting that an obscure witness took note of it for forgetful posterity." And there was Columba, who had a poet's

love of nature, and who, when death was near, was unwilling to die until he had taken leave of his monks, who were at work in the fields on the western side of holy Iona. Drawn in an ox-cart, his white head bowed by age and long prayer, he went among them, greater than a Roman conqueror returning over the Sacred Way with captive kings bound to his triumphal car. And as he homeward went by slow degrees, lingering as loath to bid farewell to the fields he loved, the old farm-horse, white, too, with age and set free from work, came up to him and put his head upon his shoulder. "The horse loves me," says Columba to Diarmid. "Leave him with me; let him weep for my departure."

The farmer's life, I know as well as any man, is not ideal; no human life is so. It has its cares, its disappointments, its hardships, its narrowness, its unloveliness. Less than any other, probably, does it suit a sentimentalist. The farmer must learn to be content with hard work and small gains. He must dress coarsely and wait long. His hands will grow hard and his knees stiff. He must love plain living, but not high thinking. He is married to the earth, and, like all the wedded, must needs learn patience. He is bound to a single spot and moves within a narrow circle. But in return he is nature's freeman, dependent upon God's providence and his own strong arm. He is no man's hired servant. He

has health, and appetite, and soothest sleep. He sits beside his own hearthstone, and his children around him look up to him as a father and a king, for he is a sovereign owner of the soil :

“ A man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
And confident to-morrows, with a face  
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
Of nature's impress—gayety and health,  
Freedom and hope—but keen withal and shrewd.  
His gestures note ; and hark ! his tones of voice  
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks.”

“The first farmer,” says Emerson, “was the first man, and all historic nobility rests on possession and use of land. Men do not like hard work, but every man has an exceptional respect for tillage, and a feeling that this is the original calling of his race, that he himself is only excused from it by some circumstance that made him delegate it for a time to other hands. If he have not some skill which recommends him to the farmer, some product for which the farmer will give him corn, he must himself return into his due place among the planters. And the profession has in all eyes its ancient charm as standing nearest to God, the First Cause. Then the beauty of nature, the tranquillity and innocence of the countryman, his independence and his pleasing arts ; the care of bees, of poultry, of sheep, of cows, the dairy, the care of hay, of fruits, of orchards and forests, and the re-

action of these on the workman in giving him a strength and plain dignity, like the face and manners of nature, all men acknowledge. . . . The farmer is a hoarded capital of health, as the farm is the capital of wealth ; and it is from him that the health and power, moral and intellectual, of the cities come. The city is always recruited from the country. The men in cities who are the centres of energy, the driving-wheels of trade, politics, or political arts, and the women of beauty and genius, are the children or grandchildren of farmers, and are spending the energies which their fathers' hardy, silent life accumulated in frosty furrows, in poverty, necessity, and darkness." \*

• The farmer is the strongest and the healthiest member of the social body ; he is also the most religious and the most moral. The children of farmers who carry into the cities fresh blood and new energy carry thither also a deeper religious faith and greater moral earnestness. The forces with which the husbandman deals are boundless and immeasurable ; they are above and beyond him, a part of an infinitely mysterious Providence. The sunshine, and the rain, and the changing seasons of the revolving year are under the control of no man. They are manifestations of a higher power, and proclaim the wisdom and goodness of God. Explain them never so much, and express them in all possible formulas of

\* *Society and Solitude*, p. 125.

matter and motion, and the mystery still remains to fill the heart with reverence and awe. In the city, on the other hand, where the eye meets nothing that the hand of man has not shaped and polished, the tendency is to flippancy and rationalism. These populations have seen so many sleight-of-hand tricks that they cannot admire the rising sun or the waving wheat-fields, or think God's universe wonderful, and so they lose reverence and faith. Let us listen to the words of an unbeliever, since it is lawful to be taught by an enemy. "Thus it was," says Buckle, "that the want of great cities, and of that form of industry which belongs to them, made the spiritual classes more numerous than they would otherwise have been; and what is very observable is that it not only increased their number, but also increased the disposition of the people to obey them. Agriculturists are naturally, and by the very circumstances of their daily life, more superstitious than manufacturers, because the events with which they deal are more mysterious—that is to say, more difficult to generalize and predict. Hence it is that, as a body, the inhabitants of agricultural districts pay greater respect to the teachings of their clergy than the inhabitants of manufacturing districts. The growth of cities has, therefore, been a main cause of the decline of ecclesiastical power." \*

\* *History of Civilization*, vol. ii. p. 151.

The farmer is conservative. He clings to ancient ways and traditions as he clings to the soil. He is not a theorist and cannot give arguments for his faith, but the excellent good sense of which agriculture is the mother teaches him that it is good to believe in God and the soul; that infidelity is a miscreed, begotten of unwisdom. He is as heedless of the newest opinions as of the latest fashions, and is content to walk in the way in which his fathers trod. He is unprogressive; and this is doubtless a defect, but a saving one, for the upward march of the race is not secure unless the mass of mankind remain steadfast by their ancient moorings. He stands, like a portion of nature, permanent and changeless, the firm foundation to the whole social fabric. The lawyer, the doctor, and the preacher are the ministers of disease. They are nourished by the sins and infirmities of man. They were not in Paradise—could never have been there. Man, the farmer, was there, and the minister of nature was the minister of health and the minister of God.

The higher moral purity of the farmer is beyond question. "The city population of France," says Michelet, "which is but one-fifth of the nation, furnishes two-fifths of the criminals." \* The following table of statistics, showing the relative percentage of illegitimate births in city and country compared with

\* *Le Peuple*, p. 20.

the total number of births, has been drawn up by Wappäus :

|                        | CITY. | COUNTRY. |
|------------------------|-------|----------|
| France, . . . . .      | 15.13 | 4.24     |
| Netherlands, . . . . . | 7.71  | 2.84     |
| Belgium, . . . . .     | 14.49 | 5.88     |
| Sweden, . . . . .      | 27.44 | 7.50     |
| Denmark, . . . . .     | 16.05 | 10.06    |
| Prussia, . . . . .     | 9.80  | 6.60     |
| Hanover, . . . . .     | 17.42 | 9.06     |

The average for the city is double that of the country. Statistics show, in like manner, that the number of divorces is nearly twice as great in the city as in the country ; and the city is, the world over, the hot-bed and focus of the social evil and of drunkenness. It is also the favorite home of the suicide. The researches of Legoyt have established that in France the number of suicides among the industrial classes is nearly twice that of the agricultural classes, while the liberal professions show a still higher proportion. The greater frequency and fruitfulness of marriage among country populations is another evidence of the superior morality of the farmer as compared with the inhabitant of the city.

The higher death-rate among city populations, though partly due to physical causes, is also, in no small degree, attributable to their lowered moral life ; and this is equally true of insanity, which is far more common in the city than in the country. The physi-



cal deterioration and diminished vitality of city populations throw additional light upon their moral condition. Were it not for the uninterrupted influx of healthy country blood the cities would become depopulated; and, due allowance being made for this revitalizing of city populations, the average duration of life is from eight to ten years longer in the country than in the city.

"It is undeniably proven," says Oettinger, "that industrial populations are inferior to the agricultural classes in ability to bear arms. Industrialism, it would seem, unnerves a people and renders them unfit for service. Engel has shown that in Saxony twenty-six per cent. of the country population and only nineteen per cent. of city people were fit for military service. In Prussia the researches of Helwing have led to similar results, which are, moreover, in perfect accord with the earlier investigations of Süssmilch, who calls attention to the ethical phase of the problem when he says that the peasant is braver and truer 'because he fights for his property and family, whereas the factory-hand has seldom a hearth and home.' " \* Dr. Bartholomäi has shown that there is a gradual and progressive diminution in the power of endurance among the laboring classes of Berlin; and this is no doubt true of all city populations.

Mr. Lecky, all of whose sympathies lead him to

\* *Moralstatistik*, p. 384.

prefer the civilization of the city to that of the country, writes the following sentence : "The promotion of industrial veracity is probably the single form in which the growth of manufactures exercises a favorable influence upon morals";\* and we may fairly question whether he is able to establish even this single exception to what he admits to be a general rule. The dishonesties of trade, the adulterations of articles of commerce, the fraudulent failures, the short weights and measures, and the merchant's lie, which is so much a matter of course that only simpletons fall into the snare, would certainly demand some little explanation. The city, however, must and will exist. Its influence upon civilization is not only great but in many ways beneficial. It is the centre of the manufacturing and commercial interests ; it is also the focus of intellectual light. The immediate contact of great multitudes does, indeed, tend to develop the lower and more animal side of man's nature, but it acts also as a stimulant upon his spiritual faculties, and the presence of the wretchedness and degradation which vice is sure to beget will not fail to rouse the better sort of men to higher efforts of unselfish devotion. All that I wish to say is that the agricultural life more than that of the city conduces to happiness and morality, and that it harmonizes better with the Christian ideal.

\* *European Morals*, vol. i. p. 139.

## IV.

## THE CITY.

A NOTICEABLE feature in our modern social life is the accelerated growth of cities and towns. The stream of population is from the country towards commercial and industrial centres. In Great Britain, from 1811 to 1821, the number of agricultural families sank from thirty-five per cent. to twenty-eight per cent. of the entire population; and in 1851 it had fallen to twenty-three per cent. From 1831 to 1841 there was an increase of forty-six per cent. in the manufacturing and commercial population, while there was during the same period a falling-off of twenty-two per cent. in the agricultural classes. In France, from 1851 to 1856, the country population fell from fifty-six per cent. to fifty-two per cent. of the whole people, and in the same time the industrial and commercial classes increased from twenty-seven to thirty-three per cent. The same movement of population is found to exist throughout the civilized world; and it is of course strongest where the manufacturing interests are most powerful. There is not merely a tendency to abandon the country for the town, but there seems

to exist a morbid yearning for the life of great cities. The population of Berlin was doubled from 1852 to 1872, and the increase during the last seven years has been still more rapid. The growth of London and Paris during the last quarter of a century has been prodigious; and, in America, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago are striking examples of the suddenness with which, in the present phase of civilization, great centres of population are created.

The causes to which this tendency is to be ascribed are many. The city is a mystery and the source of boundless wonder to the young who have always lived in the country; and, as the real life is never altogether satisfactory, it is natural that in their dreams of happiness they should look to the city as their future home. They see but the surfaces of things, and have never learned that all that glitters is not gold. And when they are told that in the great city they will readily find employment at good wages, they are filled with feverish desire to plunge into the great ocean of humanity to see what pearl they may bring up. How many a country boy have they not read of who, having entered the metropolis without friends or money, worked his way up until he became the owner of millions and dwelt in a palace—and for the mass of mankind, whether young or old, to have millions and to dwell

in a palace is more than to be a saint or a hero, or Plato or Shakspeare. It is a part of the blessedness of youth that the young believe whatever good fortune has happened to any man will somehow or other come to them.

Then the air of the city, with the stir of the multitude and the whirl of business and pleasure, intoxicates, and men are drawn into the vortex by the craving for excitement, which is often so great that honor and all that is most precious are sacrificed to the indulgence of a fatal appetite. Those who desire to lead a life of dissipation are drawn to the city by the feeling that it will offer them better opportunity and greater security from the consequences of evil-doing; and those who have lost their good name are anxious to bury themselves in the promiscuous crowd from the sight of those who know them. There are also multitudes of people for whom to think or act for themselves is a weary burden of which they are glad to be relieved. They ask only that some one hire them, and are content to eat the bread of servitude. They have no thought of the morrow, and never suspect that their condition is wretched until no one will pay for their labor longer and they are left without food or shelter. Of these people the city or the factory town is the natural home. And then there are numbers who, having

met with some success in smaller places, are persuaded that their talent is exceptional and demands a wider field. The city, too, is the paradise of adventurers and speculators, and there is the great matrimonial exchange which calls into play all the fine and subtle powers of woman. But it is needless to trace causes and motives, since commerce and manufacture create centres of population by virtue of the law of demand and supply.

The gates of the city have in our day been thrown wide open to the multitude. Formerly it was necessary to serve an apprenticeship before one was permitted to labor at a trade, but machinery has done away with trades. The workman now is only part of the machine. He requires little training and less skill. And because anybody can do this work it is easy to find people who will do it cheaply, and so wages sink until the operative receives barely enough to keep him from starvation. If, from whatever cause, he ceases to work, he is at once a pauper ; and yet there are numbers waiting to take his place. The way to the city is open to all—*Facilis descensus, sed revocare gressus.*

The country once abandoned is like a divorced wife. She will hardly be taken back, and if she is received again she will not be the mistress of the heart she once was. Those who have lived as servants in the houses of the rich will scorn the farmer's

simple fare, and those who have labored in the factory will lack the energy to buffet the storm and breathe the crisp air of the open country.

The benefits which accrue to the great body of people from the cheap and suicidal labor of the operatives are undeniable and real. It is mere declamation to affirm that machinery is the slave of capitalists and works in their interest alone. Cheap labor means cheap clothing, cheap houses, and cheap food. Never in the history of the human race have the multitude been clothed and lodged as in our day; and this progress we owe to machinery and the factory slave. To make the great body of the people more comfortable the social evolution has brought forth a new species, a race of human machines whose destiny is to be a part of the iron mechanism which transforms the world. This race forms a people apart; nothing like it has ever been seen until now either in pagan or Christian civilization. They have the name of freemen, but are indeed slaves; they make the most costly fabrics and are clothed in rags; they work in palaces and live in tenements and hovels. Their labor is the most painful and the most fatal to human life; and their wages are so low that mothers and children are forced to throw themselves into the jaws of Moloch to escape starvation. When they are old or infirm they are thrown into the street or the poorhouse, and the rich man who has hired them is



guiltless, it is held, before God and men. When the wheels of machinery stop the whole race is driven to the public trough, to be fed like cattle, until the shambles are again in readiness. They reproduce themselves, but their children are doomed from their very birth, and the race is saved from annihilation only by constantly absorbing fresh multitudes of other populations. They know that they are wretched, and yet have not the courage even to hope that they shall ever be less miserable. Where the type is perfect, as in England, they are "without God and without hope": *Vincti mendicitate et ferro*. Enter one of these palaces of industrialism. The noise is deafening, the air stifles you, and the pale, weary forms stand impassive, as conscious that they are bound to the wheel of destiny. The work is never done and it never varies. The human hand must keep time to a ceaseless and measured movement, which imposes silence and causes the vast pile to tremble. Even the power of thought is made captive and bound in irons; the great machine alone seems to live and to be the cause of the automatic motion of the human body. In other ages those who worked sang at their labor; and even in the South, in the days of slavery, the plaintive melodies of the Negro humanized his toil and helped to relieve the sadness of his heart; but here man grows dumb, and works, like the horse and the ox, in silence. Reverie



itself, that sweet solace of the weary, is not possible within this temple of Mammon, where God's image is made

“The senseless member of a vast machine,  
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel.”

Moral degradation accompanies great physical wretchedness; and the low moral state of manufacturing populations affords inexhaustible matter for discussion and consideration. The conditions of life are not favorable to purity, and the grossest sensuality prevails. Where people have no settled home and no local traditions the loss of good name is often looked upon as a mere trifle; and the sense of shame is stifled in the young who from their earliest years have lived in an atmosphere polluted by foul language. In the city old age and childhood are thrust out of sight, and the domestic morals and simple manners, which are above all price, cease to be handed down as sacred heirlooms.

One of the greatest evils which afflicts a manufacturing population is the breaking down of the family life. What family life is possible where there is no continuity, where there are no traditions that descend from father to son? The soul of the family is respect for ancestors, and where there are no traditions this respect dies out and the family becomes an accidental collection of individual existences. A

home is essential to the family, and the traditional spirit is transmitted with the home from father to son. With the possession of a fireside the family receives a life of its own, and its permanency and complete identity can be assured only by the hereditary transmission of the home. To take from it the perpetuity of its fireside is to deprive it of a great part of its strength. A house that is occupied but not owned is not a home. A true family ought to be abiding; it ought to endure while the nation exists. It reposes upon love and religion; it is nurtured by traditions of honor and virtue; and the symbol of its continuity and permanence is the home owned and transmitted from generation to generation.

Now, the poor in our great cities and manufacturing towns have no homes. They live in tenements and hired rooms; or if the more fortunate own their cottages they can have little hope of leaving them to their children, who will go to swell the great floating population that is up for universal hire, and which, work failing, sinks lower to join the army of paupers and outcasts who form, to use the modern phrase, the dangerous classes of our great commercial and manufacturing centres. What hope can we have of men or women whose childhood has never been *consecrated* by home-life to pure thoughts and generous deeds, and who too often carry

through the world the heavy burden of physical and moral disease planted in the infant heart, in which the whole human being was yet enfolded like the rose within the tender bud? Lodging-houses where people sleep and eat are not homes. Hired rooms which are changed from year to year, and often from month to month, are not homes. The operative's cottage, without yard or garden, without flowers or privacy, is not a home. The house which is empty day after day, because the mother and her little ones are chained to the great machine in the factory mill, is the grave of the family, not its home.

“Domestic bliss,

How art thou blighted for the poor man's heart!

Lo! in such neighborhood from morn to eve

The habitations empty! or perchance .

The mother left alone—no helping hand

To rock the cradle of her peevish babe ;

No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,

Or in despatch of each day's little growth

Of household occupation ; no nice arts

Of needle-work ; no bustle at the fire,

Where once the dinner was prepared with pride ;

Nothing to speed the day or cheer the mind ;

Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command !

. . . Can the mother thrive

By the destruction of her innocent sons?

In whom a premature necessity

Blocks out the forms of nature, preconsumes

The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up  
The infant being in itself, and makes  
Its very spring a season of decay!  
The lot is wretched, the condition sad,  
Whether a pining discontent survive,  
And thirst for change ; or habit hath subdued  
The soul depressed, dejected—even to love  
Of her dull tasks and close captivity."

In vain, or almost in vain, are schools and asylums built for the children of the poor in our great cities. The mechanical spirit of the age must, of course, find expression everywhere, and be applied, with superstitious confidence, to processes which are vital and not mechanical. It is not, therefore, surprising that there should be a wide-spread belief that men can be educated by machinery in very much the same way as it works up raw material into finished products ; so that a youth who has been run through the school drill is thought to be prepared for his life-work, as wheat which has been under the millstone is ready for the baker's hand. This is a false belief, whether it be held by the advocates of secular or religious systems of education. Catholics, in their logical and well founded rejection of the Common School System of this country, are led often to exaggerate the advantages which may be hoped for from a different system, and they sometimes speak and write as though all would be well if only prayers

were said and the catechism taught in the school-room. No man living, I imagine, is more persuaded of the necessity of religious education than myself, and yet I am convinced that even well-organized parochial schools will accomplish comparatively little with children who have no home training, which is the foundation of all education and of all true manhood.

The teaching of religious doctrines and practices in the school-room necessarily partakes of the defects of all school exercises. It is mechanical and becomes an affair of routine. The personal influence, indeed, of the teacher which is able to awaken the mind is able also to kindle in the heart sentiments of piety; but those who possess or exercise this power are a few out of a multitude, and the proportion is smallest in the large and crowded schools of the great cities; while there, also, the pupil finds the greatest difficulty in bringing himself into intimate and vital relations with his teacher. The child's daily companions, his recreations, the scenes that surround him; the physical aspect even of his home, the presence of his father and mother day by day, and the unconscious drinking in of their thoughts and sentiments, their hopes and fears; the family devotions, in which the father becomes a priest and the home God's sanctuary—these are the living forces that mould and

fashion the human heart ; and when later on he is taught how to use the instruments and aids of thought—such as books and the pen—the sense of increased power will but stimulate him to bring out more clearly the fair image which has been already impressed upon his stainless imagination. The child is born into the family, which takes hold of him before the church or the state ; and as its influence is the first to which he is made subject, it is for this reason the most important.

The family is not a piece of mechanism. It is the natural condition in which human life everywhere exists. It is at the beginning and at the end of all other forms of association ; and it, together with religion and property, forms the social trilogy, which emanates from the creative power. In the beginning it is society itself, and all larger associations of men rest upon it as their only secure foundation. Wherever its power is weakened, or its sanctity profaned, or its beauty tarnished, there the strength and loveliness of human life grow less. The teachings of the father and mother have, from nature, almost a sacramental character ; and it would seem to be a postulate of reason itself that, given a revelation, marriage should be lifted into the supernatural order and receive a special consecration.

Now, whether we consider the rich or the poor, it is evident that the life of the city interferes with the

power and sanctity of the family. The simple pleasures of domestic life lose their charm for those who have once plunged into the dissipations of the fashionable world ; and to be rich in the modern city is to be drawn with almost resistless force into what is called society, which, while it imposes the heaviest burdens upon its votaries, unfits them for the right fulfilment of the more serious duties, because its necessary tendency is to produce a frivolous and artificial type of character. A fashionable woman can hardly create a happy home or be the mother of true men. The woman of wealth may, indeed, resist this temptation and find her happiness in the fulfilment of duty, but she cannot change the conditions of city life which make the club-house, the theatre, and the ball-room the enemies of home. Amid these surroundings the family is secularized and parental authority loses its religious sanction. The children assert their individual liberty, and an egotistic spirit breaks up the sacred reunion of the fireside, which is possible only when love and reverence have made unselfish devotion a second nature.

Ancestral traditions are not so much forgotten as buried, since they recall, along with memories of virtue and honor, the story of poverty and humble beginnings. To appear now is more than to be, and simple truth is less than a fine house. The relations of life grow superficial and external, and companions

are sought, not for their inward worth, but for some showy or adventitious quality, such as wealth, or manner, or birth ; and as these may readily co-exist with the worst forms of vice, the depraved gain admittance into the sanctuary of the family and its sacred character is profaned.

But it is in the squalid quarters of the poor that we should study the results of the influences of the city upon home-life. There the home is not owned ; it cannot be transmitted ; it has no privacy ; it has no mystery ; it has no charm. It is a rented room in some promiscuous tenement ; it is a shanty in some filthy street or alley. The good and the bad are huddled together ; and the poisoned air does not sooner take the bloom from the cheek of childhood than the presence of sin and misery withers the freshness of the heart. The children rush from the narrow quarters and stifling air into the street, and the gutters are their playgrounds. The sounds that greet their ears are the yells of the hawkers of wares and the blasphemous and obscene oaths of the rabble. Through all the changing year they see only the dirty street and the dingy houses. Spring and summer, and autumn and winter, enacting, as they pass over the great world's stage, the divine drama of God to soften and purify the human heart, come and go, and come again ; but for these poor waifs no flowers bloom, no birds sing, no brook



murmurs in the glade with the sunfish playing in its rippling waters. Not for them does the ripe fruit hang from the bending bough ; not for them waves the golden corn. The love of liberty which Nature gives never springs within their breast. They are born in prison and will wear the chain of servitude. No possible school system can make good the lack of sunshine and pure air, and the large freedom with which the growing soul is clothed when it is permitted to fly, like the birds of heaven, through boundless space, where no barrier rises to hem it in except where earth and heaven meet, and this recedes before the advancing step.

Happy is the country child. With bare head and bare feet he wanders through wood and field, or watches the grazing flocks, or drives the cattle home at milking-time ; and all his dreams of peace and love gather round his mother and the home fireside. He is a conqueror, who leads in the halter, submissive to his will, the wild colt and lowing heifer. His ruddy cheek and eager eye tell of health and strength. The sinews that throw the world are building up in him. In a little while you may push him out into the open sea of life and he will not be afraid. Let his after-lot be what it will, he has had at the outset twelve years of sweet liberty, and the dews of this fair dawn will keep still some freshness in his heart. But the factory child is

weak in body, weak in soul. His whole nature "is subdued to what it works in." He treads a narrow path until all thought of larger life dies out of him. He lives in the mill and in the street. His home is in the promiscuous crowd. His mother is a drudge and his father is not happy at his own fireside. The dreary room and the close air drive him forth with his children into the street, where the whiskey-shop glares in his face to lure him to shame and death. How is it possible to be severe in judging the poor laborers of commercial cities and manufacturing towns? The marvel is that there is not more vice, that any noble life can thrive amid these surroundings. No labor is healthful which does not bear with it the promise of leading to better things. The curse of the slave is that he must work, and yet remain without hope of ever being other than he is. The looking forward to the fruits of one's toil is the food of hope. Without this the soul languishes.

" We perish also, for we live by hope  
And by desire ; we see by the glad light  
And breathe the sweet air of futurity ;  
And so we live, or else we have no life."

But what future in this world can these our poor brothers who are bound to the wheel of fate look for? Poverty is at the cradle and poverty is at the grave. Between life's entrance and exit there is

hard work and scant food. We must have set phrases to brace our consciences, and so we say these people are wretched because they are improvident and thriftless. Let us hear the remark of M. Villermé, who has devoted much thought to the study of the condition of the working-classes in France. Four things, he says, are required that these laborers may have a sufficiency—that they be always in good health; that they always find employment; that no household have more than two children; and, finally, that they have not a single vice. Illness, or lack of work, or a numerous offspring, or some habit of indulgence will leave them without enough to eat and wear. Are the factory hands of Fall River and Providence, or the laborers of New York and Boston, much better off? And now that we are fairly in the great world-market, to compete with the nations of Europe wages must be cut down to the point at which existence is barely possible. The laborer who marries and takes his wife into a hired room will, if he remain in the great city, have her carried to her grave from a hired room. Much, no doubt, may be accomplished by wise economy; but when one man's wages must fill half a dozen hungry mouths, clothe as many bodies, and pay the rent, there can be no thought of saving. Then there is sickness, and stoppage of work, and a hundred incidental expenses, so that

the poor are nearly always in debt. This habitual indebtedness unnerves a man and too often sears his conscience.

These poor people are kind-hearted, and misery loves company. They will meet together; they will seek to dull the sense of pain; they will believe that sorrow can be drowned. But, for them, to drink at all means excess and the death of their better selves. Drunkenness is not merely a passion; it is a disease. In the ill-fed and wretchedly-lodged populations of the great cities and factory towns the whiskey pest is endemic. Like the yellow fever, it is produced by local and atmospheric conditions. The weak body which is compelled to perform its allotted task finds at first an apparent increase of strength from alcoholic liquors, and the laborer readily persuades himself that a stimulant of this kind is a necessity. He has now given himself over to the enemy of all that he ought to love. The drink prepared for him is a poisonous adulteration. Quicker than alcohol it will deprive the soul of its control over the higher nervous centres, and the unhappy man is delivered up to his animal instincts. Statisticians have observed that the consumption of alcohol increases in times of scarcity; and here again we have evidence of the existence of a general law which impels the wretched to this fatal indulgence.

In Prussia there is a constant ratio between the number of illegitimate children and the quantity of brandy which is consumed. The consumption of brandy is greatest in Brandenburg and Pomerania, and there the proportion of illegitimate children is highest. In Westphalia and the Rhine Province there are fewest illegitimate children and the least consumption of brandy. In England Neison reckons that there are twenty-nine women for every hundred men who drink ; and we find accordingly that the number of criminals in that country is nearly four times greater among men than among women.

"It is statistically proven," says Von Oettinger, "that the average length of life, even in such highly-developed states as Prussia, has diminished during the last twenty years ; and the researches of Engel, Frantz, and others show that there is a causal relation between this phenomenon and the increased use of intoxicating liquors." \*

Neison has established in a very striking manner the tendency of the use of alcoholic beverages to lower the vital powers and shorten the average duration of life. He found, taking persons of the same age, that fifty-eight in the thousand of those addicted to drink die annually, while the death-rate of others was but nineteen in the thousand. The mortality

\* *Moralstatistik*, p. 647.

among drinkers was three times greater than among the remaining population. If the habitual use of intoxicating drink is, at best, but a slow way of committing suicide, the destruction of the poor who are able to get only adulterated liquors is inevitable, and in their case this method of suicide can hardly be called slow. It is an admitted fact, moreover, that a large proportion of those who take their lives, as of those who lose their reason, are the victims of intemperance. The individual does not suffer alone from this appalling evil ; it works decay and degeneracy in whole populations. The disease is transmitted to the offspring and tells upon the community. The seeds of some kind of degeneracy will rarely be found wanting in the children of the intemperate ; and if they seem to escape the curse the bitter fruit will be gathered by their descendants. There is yet another disease, which I may not name, but which festers in the city, and which rises from its slums like a miasm to taint the blood and rot the bones of whole generations.

It is far from my thought to say that the city is wholly evil. It has a great and high social mission. It is the most complex and difficult work of civilized man, and its fascination is felt by all. It is full, and will be full, though all the world should speak ill of it. But if those I love were rich I should not wish them to live in the city ; and if they were poor, and made it their dwelling-place, I should despair of them.

## V.

## THE IRISH IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE United States is not merely a great nation; it is a new world. It is America, for it is the head and heart of this vast continent. The inflated style in which we have been accustomed to proclaim the greatness of our country and its destiny is false rhetoric; but the sentiments which labored for expression sprang from a true view of the facts. The reality is rather above than below our plebeian fancy. It is a mistake to speak of us as one would speak of Germany, or France, or England. Those who think are coming more and more to perceive that we are a fact as wide and significant as the whole of Europe. The whole of Europe is helping to build us up. We have bridged the ocean and are able to talk across it. As with invisible grappling-chains we have taken hold of the little continent of the Old World and have moored it alongside our almost limitless expanse of coast.

However well satisfied with their lot the privileged classes of Europe may be, the conditions of life here are in every way more favorable for the masses of the people. The knowledge of this fact is

spreading day by day into wider and wider circles, so that the thoughts and hopes of increasing multitudes turn to us. We have been called an experiment ; if so, we are the most magnificent and the noblest that any people has ever made. Those who do not love us have predicted that we shall fail ; if so, it will be the most gigantic and stupendous failure ever chronicled on the page of history. Meanwhile the experiment is successful, and other millions of people will seek refuge here from the blight of iniquitous systems of land-tenure and the curse and tyranny of standing armies. Even a moderate estimate of what our population will be by the close of another hundred years of the nation's life would appear extravagant ; and if in the end there come ruin, the very ruins, like those of the Roman Empire, will be the foundations on which other peoples and new civilizations will rise.

The United States has been and is the refuge of the poor and the oppressed, and we need go no farther to seek for the cause which has drawn millions of Irish exiles to our shores.

Under Elizabeth, James I., Cromwell, and William III. all Ireland was confiscated and turned over to the enemies of the Irish race, who are still to-day the owners of nearly all its soil. The commerce and manufactures of the country were deliberately and completely ruined by the English Government in the



eighteenth century, and so agriculture remained the only resource of the people. But the land was in the hands of their enemies, who made their own laws, which deprived the tenant of all right and protection. In this way the whole population was driven to the tillage of the soil, but under such conditions that only the most wretched sort of life was possible and famine rarely absent. If the peasant attempted to improve his cabin, to plant a tree or sow a flower-bed, or in any way to throw even the shadow of beauty around his home, an increase of the rent showed the landlord's displeasure. A tenant-at-will who improves his place is a madman. The people, therefore, were compelled to live in filth and misery, and if the harvest was poor or failed they had to starve; for the political economy of Irish landlords maintains that it is better that the people should die of hunger than that the aristocrat should lose the rent which enables him to live in luxury. Famine, therefore, is necessarily chronic in Ireland, and the piteous wail of the perishing multitudes keeps time with the melancholy moanings of the ocean around the sad shores of this unhappy island. Already in the reign of Elizabeth the poet Spenser tells us the people were starving, and that cases were known where mothers in the madness of hunger had devoured their own offspring. Throughout the whole of the eighteenth century the cry of famine is heard.

In 1727 Boulter, Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, declared that thousands of families were being driven from their homes by hunger.

In 1734 Bishop Berkeley asked this question : Is there on the face of the earth any Christian and civilized people so destitute of everything as the mass of the Irish people? In 1741 the graveyards were not large enough to contain the multitudes who died of hunger. In 1778 thirty thousand merchants and mechanics in Dublin alone were living on alms, and nine-tenths of the people had no other nourishment than potatoes and water. In 1817 the famine fever attacked one million five hundred thousand persons—nearly half of the entire population of the country. In 1825, 1826, 1830, 1832, 1838, 1840 to 1850, in 1860, 1861, and 1862, and finally again in 1880, the pitiful moan of famishing thousands is heard. If such boundless and ineffable misery could be traced to the brutal and inhuman course of the government of any Catholic people the indignation which it would arouse would create a separate literature. As things are, it finds expression chiefly in the wild and despairing rush of the Irish race from its native land, carrying throughout the earth the story and the marks of the greatest sorrows and the most cruel wrongs which any people has ever suffered.

During the last sixty years three millions and a half of Irish immigrants have landed in the United States.

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The number of those who arrived before 1820 can only be conjectured, though it was doubtless comparatively small. The Irish exodus, which for a time threatened almost to depopulate the island, began after the years of famine in 1847 and 1848. From 1851 to 1860, 748,740 emigrants from Ireland landed in the United States. The great mass of these people had been able to escape barely with their lives from the blight and curse of English misrule. Often, indeed, they arrived dead rather than alive. Of the eighty-four emigrant-ships which anchored at Grosse Isle, near Quebec, Canada, during the summer of 1847, there was not one whose foul hold did not reek with the typhus pest. Quarantine was established at all ocean ports, and the number of those who landed only to die and be buried in an unknown grave is counted by tens of thousands. Those who survived found themselves beggars in a strange land, where the bigoted cry of Native-Americanism had already been sounded as a menace to them, and where both their nationality and their faith made them the chosen objects of the scorn and contempt which the English Protestant tradition had affixed to whatever is Irish or Catholic. They arrived in the New World, too, just at the time when the industrial spirit was pushing forward all kinds of manufacturing and commercial enterprises, the natural tendency of which is, as we have seen, to create

centres of population. If to this we add the social and warm-hearted character of the people we shall be at no loss for reasons to explain why the Irish immigrants remained chiefly in the cities and towns of America. There they found their countrymen ; there they found the priest and the church, with work waiting for them, at wages which seemed fabulous when compared with what they had been accustomed to receive at home.

The Far West was then, even to numbers of intelligent Americans, an unexplored wilderness, of the real nature of which they had only the vaguest notions, and it is not surprising that strangers did not look towards it with yearning. To them it was the Indian's hunting-ground, where no Christian scalp was safe ; or, if the tomahawk was buried, the hapless settler was supposed to fall a prey to the slower but hardly less dreadful infliction of fever and ague, which held a melancholy and jaundiced reign over interminable marshes. The experience of Irish Catholics might well have led them to prefer the savage to the civilized man, but their courage fell when they thought of being shaken to death by invisible enemies in the midst of boundless solitudes. It is so natural, too, when one has wandered far from home and meets with old acquaintances in a strange land, to make a pause and stop with them, above all when these old friends urge us to stay.

Other considerations, however, force themselves upon us which at the first glance make this choice of the city by the multitudes of Irish immigrants appear strange. They belonged to the most exclusively rural and agricultural people in Europe. They had nearly all been born in the country, had passed their lives there, and had known no other labor than tillage of the soil. The English Government, in destroying the commerce and manufactures of Ireland, had driven the whole people back upon the land. Does it not seem odd that the only kind of life which they had hitherto led was almost the only kind of life which they appeared to have no desire to lead in their new home? In truth, however, we have here but another evidence of the inconceivable misery to which they had been reduced in their native island. The agricultural life, as they had known it, was repulsive to all the better instincts of man. Landlordism and tenancy-at-will had associated it in their minds with squalor, poverty, and wretchedness. The fifty thousand families who in 1849 were turned out of their cabins to die of hunger by the wayside were not a sight to fill the people of Ireland with pleasant memories of the farmer's life. Things were wholly different here, but it was impossible that they should realize the difference; and it is therefore but natural that the country should have been regarded and shunned by them as a yawning grave. Of all the

fatal curses with which English tyranny has blighted Ireland, this, I think, is the worst. The source of life and fountain-head of health had been poisoned, and the natural home of man had been made hateful to them as a lazarus-house. Fleeing across the ocean, they bore with them strong faith pure hearts, and untainted blood ; and all would have been well had it not been for this spell of the demon which made them loathe the manna of God and hid from their eyes the Promised Land.

Let us study the territorial distribution of our Irish Catholic population in the light of the last United States census, that of 1870. To begin, we glance at the map where the relative number of natives of Ireland is marked in shades of green from light to deep. The first thing that strikes us is the almost entire absence of green from the whole territory of the Southern States. A speck in Virginia ; two or three little green spots in Georgia ; two or three more along the Mississippi River, at New Orleans, Vicksburg, and Memphis ; a dot of green in Texas, and another in Arkansas, and this is about all. Slavery at once presents itself as the sufficient explanation ; and since emancipation the presence of the negro population is almost as effective as slavery itself as a preventive of immigration. Our eye is next drawn to a broad line of deep emerald green on the Atlantic seaboard,

stretching from the southern point of Long Island all the way up to Maine. Here are the great cities, New York, Brooklyn, Newark, Jersey City, Albany, Hartford, New Haven, Providence, and Boston, together with the manufacturing towns of New England. South and west of this line there is a strip of green almost as large, but of somewhat lighter hue, which covers Philadelphia and Baltimore and the coal regions of Pennsylvania. Along the southern shore of Lake Ontario there is an extensive border of green of the same shade, taking in Buffalo, Rochester, and the manufacturing towns of Western New York. The southern shore of Lake Erie has a border almost as extensive, but of lighter shade. To the south and west of Lake Michigan there is a considerable area of green of the same tint as that along Lake Erie, extending from Chicago to Milwaukee, and thence west and south towards the Mississippi River. Flecks of the same hue centre around St. Louis, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Paul. Then there is a large territory, extending from New England through New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and thence along both banks of the Mississippi River into Minnesota, which is colored pea-green, and in which the density of the Irish population is, as the foot-note states, from one to three to the square mile, while in the emerald-green it is over fifteen to the square mile.



We will now proceed to examine the labor statistics of the census of 1870 in their bearing upon the significance of the territorial distribution of the Irish population of the United States. The total population of the country, ten years of age and over, was 28,228,945. Out of this number 1,769,375 were natives of Ireland. Of this total population, excluding children under ten years of age, 5,922,923, or something over one-fifth of the whole number, were engaged in agriculture. Of the entire Irish population 138,425, or about one-thirteenth of the whole number, were engaged in agriculture. The German population of the United States was 1,611,781, and of these 224,531, or a little less than one-seventh of the whole number, were engaged in agriculture. There were 600,253 natives of England and Wales, and of these 77,173, or more than one-eighth, were engaged in agriculture. About one-eighth of the Scotch and one-seventh of the French population living in the United States were occupied with agriculture. The Chinese are the only part of our population in which the number of persons devoted to agriculture is smaller than among the Irish.

A comparison with some of the leading countries of Europe will not be out of place in the present enquiry. Legoyt, who is the highest authority in such matters, gives the following table of statistics. In



every thousand inhabitants, children not included, there were engaged in agriculture in—

| YEAR.                                | NO.   |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| England (1851), . . . . .            | 236 . |
| Holland (1850), . . . . .            | 206   |
| Belgium (1846), . . . . .            | 512   |
| France (1856), . . . . .             | 529   |
| Austria (1857), . . . . .            | 502   |
| Denmark (1855), . . . . .            | 386   |
| Sweden (1855), . . . . .             | 488   |
| Bavaria (1852), . . . . .            | 692   |
| Prussia (1852), . . . . .            | 519   |
| United States (1850), . . . . .      | 446   |
| Ireland (1871), . . . . .            | 356   |
| Irish population of U. S., . . . . . | 80    |

The vast manufacturing interests of England account for the relatively small number of persons engaged in husbandry in that country ; and in Holland the low percentage of agricultural laborers is attributed to the fact that there the number of persons who belong to the liberal professions or live upon their rents is exceptionally large, being not less than 227 in the thousand.

If we now apply Legoyt's method to the Irish population of the United States we find that only about 80 in every thousand are employed in agriculture ; and the striking contrast in which this places them with the populations of all other countries, and with all other nationalities in our own, demonstrates

more irrefragably than argument the abnormal and unnatural position which they occupy in America. The number of Irish farmers in the United States, as given in the last census, is 88,923, while the Germans, with 158,000 less of total population than the Irish, are represented by 159,114 farmers.

There were in 1870, 975,734 domestic servants in the United States, and of these 145,956 were natives of Ireland and but 42,866 were born in Germany. There were 1,031,666 laborers, 229,199 of whom were born in Ireland and but 96,432 in Germany. There were 111,606 cotton-mill operatives; and of these 18,713 were natives of Ireland and but 1,214 were natives of Germany. There were 152,107 miners, 22,822 of whom were born in Ireland and but 8,579 in Germany. There were 58,836 woollen-mill operatives, and of these 12,231 were born in Ireland and but 2,664 in Germany. There were 11,718 traders and dealers in liquors and wines, 3,211 of whom were Irishmen, and 2,672 Germans. There were 120,756 draymen and hackmen, and of these 17,925 were Irishmen and 11,261 were Germans. There were 154,027 employees of railway companies (not clerks), of whom 37,822 were Irishmen and 7,855 were Germans. Of the 22,000 soldiers that constitute the United States army, 4,964 were Irishmen and 2,997 were Germans.

It would be tedious to go through the whole

list, and it is not necessary. The territorial distribution and the occupations of our Irish Catholic population are before our eyes, and their children and descendants are chiefly where they are and engaged in the same pursuits. About eight in every hundred are on the land, though not all as owners of the soil. The remaining ninety-two out of every hundred are chiefly in the tenement-houses of our great commercial cities, in the cottages of the factory towns, in the huts of the mining regions, in the shanties on the railroads and public works of the country, or living as domestic servants in the houses of the wealthy. A worse condition of affairs, so far as the welfare of the Irish people and the future of the Catholic religion in this country are concerned, I can hardly imagine. Apologists have not been and are not wanting who find this agglomeration of the Irish in the great cities and factory towns a providential occurrence. Yes, it is as providential as the penal laws, the confiscations, the massacres, and the famines which have made Ireland for centuries the home of all suffering and of all sorrows.

Lecky has said that if the Irish had been less chaste they would not have died of hunger by hundreds of thousands. But it was better to die of hunger than to be less chaste; and possibly it would have been better to die of hunger than to cross the Atlantic only to sink into the tenement-house and the factory

mill. But what good has come of this crowding of the people in the cities, either to themselves or the Church? It has facilitated the creation of episcopal sees, some one has written ; but it is safe to say that the number of bishops in the United States would be double what it is had the Irish Catholics settled on the land.

In the early ages, we are told, Christianity was propagated from the cities as from vital centres. There is no parallel whatever in the situations, and the argument is founded upon ignorance of the radical contrast between pagan and Christian civilization in respect to distribution of population. In imperial Rome the cities were the civilized world. In Christian times the basis of power and empire is the country. Of old the peasant was a slave ; but now the farmer is Christ's and nature's freeman. "The congregation of foreign-born emigrants," says a writer in the *Catholic World* (July, 1877), "most of whom are Catholics, has had the effect of making the Catholic Church in these cities a noticeable and a respectable fact, of thereby accomplishing one of the preliminaries in the work which it has yet to perform in the republic." This I confess to be unable to find to be even plausible. The Catholic Church, in the first place, is the most noticeable and respectable fact in the wide world, and whoever is unable to see this will most certainly not be impressed with its

truth by viewing the crowds of our people in the great cities. On the contrary, the traditional conceit that Protestant nations are superior to the Catholic is kept alive and strengthened by the contrast which exists between Protestants and Catholics in these commercial centres and manufacturing towns. It is, of course, easy enough to explain that the Church is in no way responsible for this ; but " things seen are mightier than things heard," and the prejudiced eye accepts the fact that pleases it, and asks for no explanations. The religious prejudices of Americans are dying out because their faith in Protestantism is day by day growing weaker ; but I am profoundly convinced that the condition of our people in the tenement-houses and the factory towns is an obstacle and not a help to their conversion. Who can travel through New England without being forced to recognize the existence of two distinct and separate peoples there ? The one has wealth and social position ; the other does the drudgery and hard work. If nothing else had been left for our people to do but to make themselves the slaves and servants of others, we might accept the humiliating position in silence ; but to congratulate ourselves upon the good there is in it seems to be little less than folly. For myself, I cannot see the jewel in the toad's head. This collecting of large multitudes of poor laborers upon single points has no

doubt, by creating parishes of fifteen and twenty thousand souls, made the erection of fine and showy churches possible. But to what purpose is this outward splendor, if the temple within the conscience falls to ruin? The pyramids of Egypt, it is said, were built by slaves; and I see not how one can look with complacency upon magnificent structures when he knows that the building of them means the absence of home and a future for God's people. Half a dozen churches serve the purpose of an episcopal city as well as a hundred; and, in fact, one of the chief difficulties in the administration of the large dioceses of this country is the necessity of maintaining, at great outlay of money, asylums and orphanages which are always crowded. Institutions of this kind would be hardly needed had the masses of our people settled upon the fertile lands which were to be had for nothing.

The true view of this whole matter, and the only view which will commend itself to a thoughtful and observant mind, is the one to which John Francis Maguire has given expression in the following words: "I deliberately assert," he writes, "that it is not within the power of language to describe adequately, much less to exaggerate, the evil consequences of this unhappy tendency of the Irish to congregate in the large towns of America. . . . It is easy enough to explain why and how those who should not have

remained in the great cities did so, but it is not easy to depict the evils which have flowed, which daily flow, which, unhappily for the race, must continue to flow, from the pernicious tendency of the Irish peasant to adopt a mode of livelihood for which he is not suited by previous knowledge or training, and to place himself in a position dangerous to his morals, if not fatal to his independence." \*

New York, which is the great American city, is also the chief centre of the Irish population of the United States. There were in New York in 1870 202,000 natives of Ireland; and if to these we add the children and descendants of Irishmen the number was probably not far from half a million. There were at that time some sixteen thousand and more tenement-houses in New York, inhabited by a population of over half a million, by far the greater portion of which was Irish and Irish-American. The wretched sanitary condition of these tenement-houses the Commissioners of the Metropolitan Board of Health declared to be the first and at all times the most prolific cause of disease in the city. They were built almost solely with a view to profit and without any regard to the health or comfort of the occupants. They were overcrowded, ill-ventilated, and filled with noxious sewer-gas and the miasm from the stagnant

\* *The Irish in America*, pp. 214, 216.



water with which the cellars were often flooded to the depth of several inches.

In portions of the Fourth Ward the population of the tenement-houses was in 1864 "packed at the rate of about 290,000 to the square mile," while even in London the density of population has never gone beyond 175,816 to the square mile. The descriptions given by the sanitary inspectors of these habitations and their inmates would soil a page intended for all eyes. People who live in this atmosphere and amid these surroundings must drink. The perfectly sober would die there from mere loathing of life. At every step there is a low dram-shop, and even the children acquire the appetite of their parents for alcoholic stimulants.

The destruction of infant life in this atmosphere is without parallel. "The rate of mortality in children under five years of age in New York," say the Commissioners of the Board of Health, "is greater than in any city with which this board has correspondence; and the cause of this excess will best be sought in the miserable housing and habits of the laboring classes, and in the multiplied sources of foul air in our two cities. . . . From various data now in hand the conclusion is warranted that death has in each of the past two years taken nearly one-third of the total number before the first birthday."

This high death-rate is not confined to the infant



population of the tenement-houses. The occupations of the masses of the Irish people in the United States are precisely those which are most fatal to human life, either from the character of the work itself or from the kind of existence which it necessarily involves. Whatever lowers morality diminishes vitality, and the inspired word, Death is the wages of sin, is a truth which is experimentally verifiable. Not only do drunkenness, gluttony, impurity, wrath work unto death, but whatever disturbs peace of conscience or interferes with wholeness of character co-operates to the same end. Peace and tranquillity are the atmosphere of life; trouble and anxiety are the agents of death. Laborers who build railroads, construct levées, and dig canals, or who are employed in mines and foundries, or as engine-drivers or hackmen, are not only more exposed to fatal accidents than others, but they are also less protected from the hurtful influences of climate and change of season. They have bad food and water, are often compelled to live in tents and shanties, frequently fall ill of acute diseases, and in these attacks they have no proper medical aid or nursing. They are paid off at stated times, so that once a week or once a month they are flush with money, and in their surroundings the only indulgence which presents itself is a debauch. The mortality from disease of those who lead such lives will not fall far short of that of an army in the field,

where the deaths from exposure and hardship exceed the loss of life in battle.

The work of the factories is, as all admit, specially fatal to women and children. "Woman," says Dr. Weber, "is weaker than man. Like the child, she has a more mobile character, and consequently continuous occupation fatigues her more than man. Her digestion is more rapid ; she eats less at a time, and ought, therefore, to interrupt her work to take nourishment oftener than man. She is also more agile, and can in a given time go through a greater number of precise and quick movements than man. Hence there is an increasing demand for woman's work in the shops and factory mills, since this ease and quickness of movement enable her to adapt herself so readily to the motions of machinery ; but to do this she expends an excessive amount of vital force. The difference is like that between running and walking. The necessity of remaining for hours in a standing posture is the cause of still greater hurt to her physical constitution. Some relief she might get if, on leaving the shop or the factory, she was permitted to rest, but at home she finds household duties and the care of children awaiting her." There are few sadder sights than the poor women of the cotton and woollen mills of New England, so many of whom are Irish girls, whose cheeks once bloomed with health as fresh and fair as the purity of their hearts.

In the manufacturing towns of England and of other parts of Europe there are doubtless scenes more gloomy; but there no escape seemed to exist from this death in life, while in our own land everything ought to be possible rather than this slavery.

These considerations, and others which will readily suggest themselves, give the true solution of the difficulty concerning the smallness of the Catholic population of the United States. It is constantly asserted that the natural increase of the Catholic immigrants would give us to-day a population of not less than twelve millions, whereas our numbers do not exceed seven millions. Therefore, it is argued, five millions, or nearly one-half, have fallen away from the Church. Nothing could be more fallacious. Comparatively few have abandoned the faith, and our losses are chiefly to be sought for in the almost incredible infant mortality among our people, in the high death-rate among the immigrants themselves, and in the fact that large numbers of them have not married at all. It was this exceptional mortality of Catholic parents which threw upon the world thousands of orphans at a time when the Church was not yet prepared to offer them asylum; and very many of them doubtless fell into the hands of Protestants, and were so lost to the Catholic cause. And, as I have shown, there was a remnant who settled on the land; and as there was no organization or guidance in this movement, many took up

Government claims or bought farms without any thought of their surroundings, and found themselves in Protestant neighborhoods beyond the reach of priest or church. They, of course, soon became indifferent, and their children grew up without any knowledge of their faith, and frequently joined some one of the sects. The intermarriage of Catholics with Protestants has been, and is still, another cause of loss to the Church in this country ; but the fountain-head of the evil, compared with which all other causes of loss are insignificant, was the fatal and never sufficiently to be deplored concentration of the Irish immigrants in the great cities, the factory towns, and the mining districts.

They, of all the peoples of Europe, had been least prepared by their training at home to face the dangers and temptations of the city. They had lived almost exclusively in the country, and many of them got sight of a large town for the first time on the day on which they sailed for America. Their whole character was that of the best of rural populations ; for even the fault with which they have been most reproached—idleness—was not theirs, but that of circumstances. They were strong and healthy ; they were simple-minded and honest ; they were reverent of law and pure of heart. God never sent a more faithful or willing people to build up his kingdom in this world. The worst government that ever oppressed

the poor had, indeed, reduced them to misery ; but in the midst of all their sufferings they had preserved intact the sanctity of the family, and the integrity of the faith with chastity of heart. The home existed among them, enthroned as in a sanctuary in the hearts of the young, filled with reverent piety. It threw a sacred charm around the poorest hut and gave dignity to rags. Here was a people worthy to enter into a Promised Land and to build up homes that would endure from generation to generation. But who can fathom the secret of God, or say why he placed no angel with flaming sword over the gate of the city to warn of death and ruin, and to proclaim that the people which will live and flourish, and have power and endure, must shoot deep its roots into the soil and draw thence its sustenance? Or had some providential man been raised up to this end he would have done a higher work than he who broke the penal chain of servitude.

That which above all things is most necessary to those who choose the mode of life which the Irish adopted in America was precisely what they altogether lacked—economy. Practical knowledge of the art of saving had not formed a part of their training, for the simple reason that the English Government had taken care that they should own nothing which could be saved. Even to-day, after the population has been reduced a third, and two-thirds of the ara-

ble land of the island have been turned into pasture, there are 120,557 tenants who hold less than five acres each, and who consequently are barely able to keep the wolf from the door. The generosity of the Irish Catholics is proverbial, but we cannot help asking ourselves, Is it with them a virtue or a fault? The knowledge of how to save five cents contributes far more to the comfort and morality of the poor than an increase of salary equal to ten times that amount. The prodigal is always in want, even when he is wealthy; and when extravagance is in the habits of the poor the lack of the necessities of life is imminent. "The unwise use of a large salary," says Renouard, "is the cause of more misery than low wages."

The laborers of France, Belgium, and Italy live comfortably upon what we in this country would call starvation wages, and yet the necessities of life are as dear there as with us. Economy implies forethought, a wise solicitude concerning the future, the consideration of the accidents and chances of life, and anxious care for the welfare and prosperity of one's children. Now, there is no social condition so unfavorable to this habit of mind as that of the classes who work for wages, and none in which it is so absolutely essential to happiness and morality. The operative who hears the rush of machinery, and receives every Saturday night his ten or twenty dollars, spends from week to week what he earns and lives on,

in perfect security, as though sickness, stoppage of work, strikes, and lowering of wages were evils that belonged to some other planet. And when he has a family it is easier to see how well it would be to put something by than to understand how it is possible to do so. To preach economy to our people is most certainly to preach God's word to them ; but how will this preaching have any efficacy, unless we can point out the way in which forethought and self-control will lead to a home and independence, and to the founding of a family which will endure from generation to generation ?

Our poor Catholics, with a filial piety which cannot be too highly praised, have sent large sums of money to their kindred at home, and the savings-banks have a great deal more of their money. One of these institutions in Providence has, it is said, two millions of unreclaimed deposits for which no owner has or can be found ; and nearly all of this sum is doubtless the money of Catholics. This is but an example of the careless, not to say reckless, manner in which our people too often manage their business affairs. The masses of them, after twenty or thirty years of hard labor, are still where they began, in a hired room, and dependent for bread upon their day's wages ; or if they own a cottage in a factory town, this is a protection against the evils of pauperism only so long as they are able to labor and can find work. The records of



the New York Almshouse show that of the 75,560 inmates during the last twenty-five years, 46,239 were Irish; and the statistics of similar institutions in Massachusetts give like results.

Another cause of serious injury to our people in the cities is politics. A saint or a sage could hardly touch the pitch of American ward politics without defilement; and for the laboring classes they are generally a school of immorality and degradation. They imagine that some good can come to them through the success of this or the other party, or the election of this or that candidate; and the good they hope for, when not altogether visionary, is a curse in the shape of an office or a job. It is quite sufficient, however, to excite them and to fill them with the idea that issues are at stake in which they have a personal interest. Hence they enter with enthusiasm into the canvass, which means that they drink an unlimited quantity of abominable poison. In the low moral state of political sentiment in this country, and especially in the cities, the poor, following the example of the wealthy, readily bring themselves to leave conscience altogether aside in such matters, until they come to think that to sell or buy a vote or to vote fraudulently is as simple a business transaction as to sell or buy a loaf of bread. All this is destructive of character, and not only ruinous to the poor but hurtful to the general welfare.



Then it is almost impossible for them to keep out of trades-unions and other societies, the tendency of which in the United States will be more and more in the direction of communism. There is no reason to think that the operatives and laborers of this country will ever again receive the high wages of the past. We have, as a manufacturing people, entered into the market of the world, and to enable us to compete with the nations of Europe labor must be relatively as cheap here as it is there. It is folly to imagine that trades-unions and strikes can permanently control the price of labor. If American, or English, or Irish operatives cannot live on wages which will permit American manufacturers to run their business profitably, their places will be taken by Canadian, Chinese, French, or Belgian workmen. The increase of Canadian laborers in the factories of New England since the fall in wages is already very noticeable, and the transfer of the manufacturing interests to the South and West will bring the negro into competition with the white man as a cheap operative. The well-known fondness of the negro for the life of cities and towns will predispose him to be content with the lowest wages and the most wretched existence, if only he can dwell in the midst of a multitude of his own kind. The condition, then, of the Irish Catholics in the commercial centres and factory towns is unfortunate, not merely or chiefly on account of their present misery,

but because so long as they remain where they now are there is no hope of a brighter future for them or their children.

In Europe the discussion of facts of this kind is to a great extent meaningless, because there no effective remedy can be applied to the evil. Legislative enactments and philanthropic efforts can do little to alleviate the miserable lot of the factory slave. The best measures are only palliative, because wretchedness is the inevitable result of the mode of life which industrialism develops. It is possible to build better houses, to prevent the employment of children, and to lessen the hours of labor ; but when all this and much else is done the essential misery still remains.

The only effective word is that which God bade Moses speak to the children of Israel : " And thou shalt say to them : The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared to me, saying : Visiting I have visited you : and I have seen all that hath befallen you in Egypt. And I have said the word to bring you forth out of the affliction of Egypt, into a land that floweth with milk and honey." The land that floweth with milk and honey is here, and it is waiting for the heavily burdened who will flee from the house of bondage. It offers the only full and satisfactory solution of the problem ; but the Bible adds a word which makes us doubt whether

those who have ears to hear will give heed: "And Moses told all this to the children of Israel; but they did not hearken to him, for anguish of spirit and most painful work." \*

\* Exodus vi. 9.

## VI.

## THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE material basis of civilization is agriculture. Schiller's poetic thought is simple truth :

“ Dasz der Mensch zum Menschen werde  
Stift' er einen ew'gen Bund,  
Gläubig mit der frommen Erde  
Seinem mütterlichen Grund.”

From this sacred covenant of man with his mother earth has sprung the whole order of human society. Not God's people only, but the Aryan race as well, as modern ethnological researches have shown, was, in its origin, pastoral and agricultural. The fable of the ancients that Antæus was invincible so long as he stood upon the solid earth, but grew helpless as a child when lifted into the air, teaches a truth which can be lost sight of only at our peril. The people which has no foothold on the soil can have no future in the land. It is lifted into the air and may have a momentary prominence, but it will perish quickly and fatally of atrophy, physical and moral. It has abandoned God's providential highway and has gone

aside into the by-paths of men, which do not lead to the fountains of life.

Stuart Mill will not be suspected of undue bias in this matter, and his words are : "Hitherto it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions have lightened the day's toil of any human being. They have enabled a greater population to lead the same life of drudgery and imprisonment." Nor will the authority of Dr. Engel, the director of the Royal Statistical Bureau of Berlin, be called in question. "This," he says, "is the judgment passed upon the modern industrial system, especially as it exists in great cities, by the most enlightened statesmen and by others who are most thoroughly acquainted with life as it exists : it is, in spite of the philanthropic efforts of individuals and the heroic endeavors of many employers, the sacrifice of human beings to Capital—a consumption of men which, by the wasting of the vital forces of individuals, by the weakening of whole generations, by the breaking up of families, by the ruin of morality and the destruction of the joyousness of work, has brought civilized society into the most imminent peril." \*

Nine-tenths of the Irish and their descendants in the United States are being offered up as human sacrifices in this temple of Mammon, the master

\* *Jahrbuch Berlins von 1868.*

idol of the age ; and yet we Catholics are all the while congratulating ourselves upon the great progress which we are making in this country. We have been living on borrowed capital unwisely invested, and there is little risk in asserting that, unless vast changes in the territorial distribution of our population take place, the American Church is to-day relatively more powerful than she will be in twenty-five years or half a century hence. I know that this is not the popular view with us, but the question is whether or not it is the true view. We Catholics who speak the English language have been so habitually belied and calumniated that we have grown to feel a kind of impatient resentment even when people tell the truth about us, if it is not altogether pleasant. It is to be hoped, however, that we are now reaching a point where we shall be able to criticise ourselves and to take without offence some other tone than that of self-laudation. Much, doubtless, has been done of which we are justly proud ; but things won are done, says Shakspeare. Joy's soul lies in the doing. We shall be following St. Paul's counsel if, forgetting the things that are behind us, we stretch forward to those to which we have not yet attained. We are living in an age in which the unconscious evolution of society is fast giving place to its conscious development. Wholly different was the era in which the Church presided over

the formation of the peoples that have grown to be the modern world. Then language, literature, schools, forms of government, and nationalities were created by processes and agents that seemed to work without conscious purpose, or at least without suspicion of the end to which they were tending. An invention such as the printing-press or the steam-engine, a rude form of which existed already in the eleventh century, appeared to be an accident, and in perfecting it and applying it to manifold uses men felt their way like one who walks in the dark, and long periods of time often passed before great progress was made. A mediæval university was the growth of centuries and the work of many minds, who, without seeming to intend to do so, wrought in harmony with one another, just as forms the most opposite and unlike conspired to create the unity and perfection of the Gothic cathedral. And people who are impressed with this idea often argue that if we are to have a Catholic university in the United States it will be founded by some such process as that by which the great schools of the Middle Ages were formed. They do not read aright the signs of the times. A university will no more grow up of itself in our day than will a new language. I am saying nothing against the strength and durability of institutions which owe their existence to

unconscious evolution. I simply state that in the present age this is not the way in which they come into existence. The tendency of civilization is to increase the self-consciousness both of the individual and of the social body. Reason, in some shape or other, becomes the incentive and agent of development. Men form all kinds of theories and associate themselves together in order to realize them. If there is some evil—as slavery, for instance—recognized by the law, but in conflict with their notions of right, they will form organizations to agitate and employ whatever other means may suggest themselves for its removal. If they entertain a high opinion of the value of mental instruction, they will create school systems and secure their prosperous working by levying a tax on all private property for their maintenance. If an inter-oceanic canal is held to be desirable, nations will unite to prosecute the work. The development of the natural resources of the country will be systematically carried out by the Government, and private corporations will be formed to work mines, to construct railroads, to erect factories, and to found colonies and build up new empires. If a useful invention is made, capitalists will take hold of it, and the spirit of enterprise and greed will lead to all sorts of improvements upon the original model; so that nothing is al-



lowed to take its way, but everything is forced and evolved with conscious purpose.

The action of the Church is influenced by this spirit of increased self-consciousness which directs the movement of the age. Societies are organized for the propagation of the faith, for the spread of Catholic literature, for the defence of the rights of the Church, and to give help and protection in a thousand ways to the poor and the young. The natural causes which led to the definition of Papal Infallibility are traceable to this higher self-consciousness which pervades the Catholic body. It must be confessed, however, that Catholics have not yet fully recognized the significance of the social phase upon which we are entering. Our necessary and essential conservatism is one of the causes which make us slow to admit the need of adopting new methods of action ; and the absolute importance of the integrity of the faith, both in the letter and the spirit, gives to narrow and contentious minds the fairest opportunity to thwart the efforts of the noblest and most Catholic souls. Hence those who are able to do the best service in the cause of religion often grow over-cautious and lose the pith of action from a natural dread of the clamor of the unreasoning. This is most unfortunate ; for no other institution is so able as the Catholic Church to work with conscious purpose and to organize effectively for the attainment of definite

ends. Her constitution is so completely founded by God upon the solid basis of fact that more than any other strong and just government is she able to employ in her service the most opposite talents, and to bring into harmony with her own aims all the manifold contrivances of men. The railroad, the printing-press, and the telegraph may be her ministers, as the most democratic society may serve to bring out in all its fulness her natural and inborn sympathy with the people, with the poor whom Christ loved ; so that the men who have made the heavens reverberate with the cry of liberty and fraternity may, when the noise and confusion have died away, be surprised to find that they have been the heralds of the faith of the Divine Carpenter of Nazareth.

There is no part of the civilized world in which there are at present fairer opportunities for Catholics to do a great and lasting work for the Church, for her children, and for the age than here in the United States. Pius IX., it is reported, was accustomed to say that only in America was he truly Pope. Nowhere else, certainly, was his liberty of action greater. In the appointment of bishops, in the formation of dioceses, in the approval and promulgation of laws for the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline, the Pope meets with no hindrance whatever in this country. The bishops, also, have the fullest freedom in the exercise of their high office. The levites who

are intended for the service of the altar are left wholly in their hands, to be trained and formed by whatever kind of education they may deem most suitable to fashion the perfect man of God ; and the public opinion and the customs of the people co-operate with them in their efforts to keep only the worthy in charge of souls. The theory with us, however imperfectly it may be carried out, is that the man is for the office, not the office for the man ; and we do not admit that the patronage of those in power, or ancient statutes, or rights of presentation should have force to keep the unworthy in position. It is deserving of notice, too, that the Catholic bishops are the only class of men in the republic who exercise real power and at the same time hold office for life. The anti-Catholic prejudices which we inherited from England still linger, indeed, in the popular mind, but they are constantly growing weaker in face of the fact, which is day by day gaining recognition, that Catholics form an integral part of the American people ; and there is a common-sense view of the case very generally received, to the effect that, apart from the merits of the controversy about the abuses and tendencies to which the Church is supposed to be committed in the past, we Americans are living in a new world and under new social conditions, and ought not to permit the animosities and quarrels of ages that are gone to enter as a disturbing element into our life. The

Church is here, and has avowedly the right to be here, and the stronger she grows to be here by open and fair means the more will she be admired and respected ; for a striking trait in the character of the American is his unqualified approval of success.

When we turn now to consider what is to be done in order to sink deeper the foundations of the Church in this land, which is half the world, so that they shall uphold a glorious and imperishable temple of God, many thoughts urge themselves upon our attention. In the first place, what our fathers have been doing we must continue to do. New dioceses are to be created, new parishes are to be formed, more priests are to be ordained ; the religious orders are to be multiplied and strengthened ; works of charity which are founded for the care of the orphan, the reformation of the fallen, the nursing of the sick, and the sheltering of the aged, must continue to receive all encouragement and assistance. Then there is the still greater work of the religious education of the young. A system of education which excludes the teaching of religion is, in our eyes, a radically and essentially false system. We do not object to taxation for the support of schools ; we are not opposed to laws which render school attendance obligatory ; but we do not accept, we never can accept, for our own children a system of education which ignores what we hold to be the fountain-head of all true knowledge and of all right

conduct—the inculcation of the love and fear of God through the teaching of definite religious doctrines and practices. It is not a part of the duty of true and loyal American citizens that they should all think alike on questions of education any more than on questions of religion. We use our privilege not to be on the side of the majority, and we suffer for it, though the loss may be gain. The consequence, however, is that we are compelled to form a system of our own. We have some twenty-three hundred parochial schools, in which there are over four hundred thousand children. This work must be continued until every parish shall have its school. More than this, some system of grades, examinations, and superintendence of diocesan boards must be introduced into our schools. Standards and tests of qualification in the teachers, whether secular or religious, should also be fixed by some central authority, so that it shall no longer depend upon accident whether the school is Catholic except in name.

Something of this kind has already been begun here and there, and the work of organization will doubtless be continued. And for the higher education, it is impossible to remain content with the present Latin schools and elementary theological seminaries. A system of education which does not receive as its crown a true and real university is not only incomplete, but deprived of its surest defence

and the master-light which should shine upon the steps of those who tread the humbler paths of knowledge. But if this centre of Catholic culture is to exist in our age and country it must be created, with deliberate and conscious purpose. To hope that it will come as a natural and spontaneous development is to cherish a delusion.

Then there is the great and holy cause of temperance—the all-earnest and ceaseless warfare upon one of the arch-enemies of our people and our faith in the United States. It is God's work to spend one's self and to be spent in unwearying efforts to assist in creating a public opinion which will more and more hold drunkenness to be one of the foulest and most loathsome of vices—the spirit of the fiend working the ruin of man, of woman, of the child; breaking into the sanctuary of home with murderous hand and polluting its sweet air with pestilent breath; filling with its inhuman victims prisons and asylums, and peopling the abyss of hell.

It is important, too, that more serious efforts should be made to bring the negro population of this country under Catholic influence; and this can never be done until we fully recognize that this is a work which must be taken in hand by the bishops and priests of the United States. To expect any great results from the labors of missionaries sent out by foreign seminaries is to ignore the essential con-

ditions of the problem with which we have to deal.

It is doubtless most desirable also that steps should be taken to organize a Catholic Congress which will meet annually or biennially, the constitution and workings of which will be similar to the *Generalversammlung* of the Catholics of Germany. No other means, it seems to me, will so certainly and effectively bring about the intelligent co-operation of the clergy and laity for the furtherance of Catholic interests. The troubles which arose from trusteeism have tended to make laymen more or less indifferent to our religious wants, because of the concentration of the whole management of the affairs of the Church in the hands of ecclesiastics. Our organization, however, is now so perfect that we can without fear invite the active aid of the laity ; and any work which will tend to cause Catholics in general to take a more intelligent interest in the progress and welfare of religion will prove most salutary.

But greater than this, and more urgent than all else, is the cause of Catholic Colonization, which gathers up into itself the work of religion, of charity, of education, of temperance, and of lay co-operation. By Catholic colonization I mean the systematic and deliberate effort to take our people from the great cities and factory towns, from the mines and railroads, from domestic service in hotels and private houses, and to



place them upon the cheap and fertile lands of our country. I would co-operate with those who advertise that "no Irish need apply" by striving to make Irishmen and Irishwomen unwilling to ask any man to hire them. I would labor to lift them out of the fluctuating and uncertain state in which they are at the mercy of commercial crises and the mutations of trade, without a permanent home, and therefore without the possibility of historic growth or the opportunity of exerting a lasting influence. I would show to them that the atmosphere in which the life of the family is enfeebled will necessarily prove fatal to the reverent and religious habit of mind which is one of the chief glories of the Irish race. I would proclaim that it is vain to hope that Catholic schools will form a noble and Christian character in children who have no home. I would declare that parents who wilfully and knowingly bring up their children amid surroundings which must be a proximate occasion of ruin have denied the faith and are worse than infidels. I would point out the plain fact that the Irish race, in its present floating and unsettled state, can have little hope of a future in America, and will pass away and leave no monument worthy of itself.

But it is needless to enlarge upon a subject with which I have been dealing all along; and, besides, there is probably no thoughtful or observant person whose sympathies are with the Irish people and the



Catholic religion who is not ready to admit that it would be difficult to exaggerate the evil of which I speak. No one, I presume, would think of denying that it would be immeasurably better for the people and the Church if the hundreds of thousands who are working in the factory mills or the mines, or living in the tenement-houses of the great cities, were securely settled on their own land. On this point there are not, I imagine, two opinions among serious persons. But there are large numbers who will take the view that the evil is remediless, and they will probably think it a mistake to bring out in such strong relief, as I have sought to do, the dangers which may justly be apprehended from a state of things which, after all, cannot be greatly changed. And it is possible, I must confess, that a right appreciation of the facts may justify them in this opinion. In the first place, there is a static quality in masses and numbers which it is difficult to overcome. The crowd of men are more passive than active, and will endure an almost incredible degree of misery and oppression rather than seek relief which can be found only in radical changes. They prefer to endure the ills they suffer rather than fly to others they know not of. Then there is the intoxication of city life, which seems to deprive the poor, even more than those who are well to do, of the power of seeing things as they are, so that they often imagine that it is better to be wretched

in the company of thousands than to dwell in comfort and independence in the bosom of one's own family. Their prejudices against country life are more unreasonable and therefore more difficult to overcome than those of the educated, who often look forward to the quiet of some rural home as the peaceful refuge of their old age, where, far from the maddening crowd, they may give the thoughts and loves of their closing days to God and the soul. It is a dream only, but filled with images of what is deepest and most heavenly in the human heart.

Again, it must be admitted that the causes which in our day drive multitudes of the laboring classes in Europe and America to swell the population of the industrial centres tend also to keep them there. Their presence has helped to build up interests, both religious and secular, which, it might be held, would be endangered if it were possible, by systematic and persistent agitation, to bring about any considerable redistribution of population. At points where large numbers of Catholics have been gathered costly churches, and occasionally schools also, have been erected, and these structures are frequently still encumbered with debts. It is in accordance with psychological laws that, in such circumstances, the pastors should feel no great enthusiasm for a cause which might have the effect of lessening the revenues with which they are to meet their obligations.

As the gas-jet by which we write seems as large as one of the fixed stars, so do our own little projects rise mountain-high before our eyes and shut from view great and universal causes. It is not surprising, then, that instances should be known in which the pastors deliberately set their faces against any attempt to persuade their people that the life of an operative in a factory mill is not as desirable as any other. And it is held that in so acting they are but following the example of one of the ablest and most enlightened prelates of the Church in America. I refer, of course, to Archbishop Hughes, whose views on this subject, as brought out by a project to found an Irish colony in Nebraska in 1857, it is impossible to pass over in silence in a treatise such as this. These views, it is proper to remark, are found in a brief address, which is evidently an impromptu and incidental utterance, inspired by what he considered a disregard of his episcopal authority, and delivered, as its tone indicates, under a feeling of strong disapprobation of the proceedings of a colonization convention which had been recently held in Buffalo. He suspected the good faith of some of the members of that convention, and openly declared that there were landowners among them whose sole aim was to advertise their own property. It is not surprising, under such circumstances, that the general impression made by the archbishop's speech should have been

that he was opposed to the settlement of the Catholic people upon the land, though he expressly declared that he "had ever given to the emigrant who came in his way the advice rather to seek a home in the West than remain in our cities." He fully accepted, therefore, the general principle which underlies all honest efforts to induce the poor to make homes for themselves in the country. In the very next breath, however, he openly condemns all colonization schemes, all systematic efforts to accomplish what he nevertheless admits to be desirable. "But," he says, "that was one by one, in the natural order, not by an artificial combination of men who were unfit to govern a township if anybody gave them one; it was by no combination, because emigration from Ireland hither, and from hence westward, was a natural thing." He stated also that in one of his early dreams he had wished to form an association for the purpose of buying ten or twenty thousand acres of land in the present State of Wisconsin, with a view to forming a Catholic settlement; but when he mentioned the project to men of means and intelligence they had condemned it as wholly impracticable. He protested, moreover, against all attempts to build up exclusively Irish towns, and ended by saying that, so far as he himself and the clergymen of his diocese were concerned, he desired that "religion should not be debased by being brought into questions of this kind."

That Archbishop Hughes became the opponent of colonization is, I am persuaded, most unfortunate. No other man has ever had such influence over the Irish Catholics of the United States, and no other could have done so much to make them realize that their interests for time and eternity required that they should make homes for themselves on the land. To imagine that questions of this kind do not concern religion and the ministers of religion is a fatal mistake. This is primarily and essentially a question of morality. The important consideration is: What surroundings will best protect the sanctity of the family, preserve the purity of childhood, and promote the growth of religious character? When we deplore the poverty of our people in the cities we are thinking above all of the sin and degradation of which, in such an atmosphere, poverty is so often the occasion; and so through the whole argument the moral element is decisive. Now, religion rests upon morality; it is not the intellect but sin which undermines faith; and to seek to exclude the priest from active participation in movements which affect the moral welfare of his people is to condemn him to impotence.

To oppose, in the matter of settlement upon the land, what is supposed to be the natural order to artificial combinations—that is, to approve of the individual who buys a farm, but to condemn a number

of individuals who enter into an association in order to secure along with the farm advantages of church, school, and society—is, upon the very face of the matter, to take up an untenable position. If it is desirable that the poor should get homes upon the land, organized efforts to assist them in doing so cannot but be praiseworthy; and when there is question of settling in new and distant parts of the country it cannot be said that the natural order is to go one by one. Here certainly the *væ soli* may be applied with special force. The point raised as to the unwisdom of attempting to establish exclusively Irish towns is of no importance. In the first place, this is not an aim of Irish Catholic colonization. No such national exclusiveness exists. Americans, Germans, Norwegians, and others may, if they so desire, and in fact often do, settle in the Irish colonies of the West. Still there is no reason to fear that evil would result from exclusively Irish settlements. The Irish citizens of the United States are intensely American, and possession of the soil will but strengthen their spirit of patriotism.

We come back again, then, to our original position, that it would be the greatest of blessings to hundreds of thousands of our poor people who are working in factories and mines, or engaged in other hired service, if they could be settled in their own homes upon the cheap lands of our country. The evil of their pre-

sent mode of life is great ; is it also remediless ? I have stated the reasons which make one doubt whether there is hope of bringing about any great change in the territorial distribution and occupations of our people ; and I will now say that my own conviction is that there is hope, and that this is, of all others, the work which in our day the Catholic Church in the United States is called upon by God's providence to accomplish. The priest is the leader of the Irish people. His ascendancy over them has been consecrated by centuries of heroic sacrifice and sacred memories. He has stood by them when all others deserted them. He kept alive in their hearts the knowledge of God and the love of virtue during the long years in which the whole aim of a strong and cruel government was to exterminate them or reduce them to the condition of the brute. They trust him, they venerate him, they love him. He is, in their eyes, in very deed the minister of God and the father of their souls. Their enemies took from them their lands, destroyed their churches and cloisters, reduced their chieftains to beggary ; but the priest followed them into the bogs and the hovels, carrying on his lips and in his hands the hope and love of higher things. "I think I can say, without fear of contradiction," says Bishop O'Connor, "that, as a class, the clergy was the only body that, in supplying many good men, did not supply also a whole brood



of betrayers. Statesmen betrayed them, riding into office on their shoulders, and then selling them for money or place. Hot-spoken orators betrayed them, and slipping away in the hour of peril they had provoked, or making terms with the enemy, left the masses to bear its brunt. Many from among themselves, with warm and honest hearts but not with equal discretion, arousing in them an enthusiasm prompted more by their wrongs than warranted by their power or suggested by their religion, and evoking a spirit that could neither be guided nor repressed when its dictates became unlawful or hopeless, only plunged themselves and the whole people into deeper ruin."

What a priceless privilege to inherit the love and confidence of a whole people by virtue of the very order to which we belong! And how incalculably great is not the responsibility which is thereby laid upon us? Like all who have suffered deep wrong, the Irish are sensitive, but to the priest they give liberty to speak the whole truth, certain that he is their friend. This is the people which God has preserved to his Church, to show how natural and imperishable is the bond of sympathy that binds the heart of the priest to the heart of the common man. There is no other people in existence so ready to listen to the priest, speaking in the name of God and the soul; no other so willing to make sacrifices for



the cause of religion ; no other that responds with such quick sensitiveness to appeals made in behalf of its spiritual interests. Three millions of Irishmen, it is said, from 1838 to 1842, in obedience to the voice of a priest, forswore the use of alcoholic drink. Among no other people could this have happened. Now, in America, in the midst of surroundings the most undesirable, the Irish people retain their ancient faith and their ancient love of the priest ; and I am persuaded that organized agitation, in connection with a wise system of colonization, under the direction and with the active co-operation of the bishops and priests of the United States, would lead to the accomplishment of a work which few now believe practicable, and which, in its salutary results, would surpass the dreams of its most enthusiastic supporters. This is, moreover, a work which would commend itself to all men, and which even our enemies would applaud ; and infidels themselves, though they should deny that it is God's work, would at least be compelled to confess that it is the noblest work of man. So far as the Irish people are concerned, it can be accomplished by the Catholic Church, and by no other power on earth, for to none other will they listen.

Even if there were question whether it is wise or proper that bishops and priests should enter actively into such a movement, the doubt vanishes in the presence of the necessity. They must lead, or we

must fold our arms and give up hope of rescuing our people from the dangers which surround them. Even their negative approval will be fatal; for to do this work great enthusiasm is necessary, and this cannot be roused except by an appeal to the eternal and highest interests, of which the priest is the special representative. Here, moreover, is a providential opportunity of coming out of that isolation to which the spirit of the age would condemn the Church, by seeking to compel God's minister to confine himself to the inculcation of religious and moral doctrine and the administration of the sacraments, whereas in truth nothing human is foreign to him, and above all nothing that concerns the welfare of the poor. Here, too, is a work which brings us into direct and immediate accord with the conscious development which is the characteristic of our present social existence. The very difficulties even are of a kind which commend it to those who have faith and a heart. To imagine that the people will be unwilling to pass through the desert in order to reach the Promised Land is to ignore the power of religion and a virtuous life to make hardship endurable. The people are worthy of greater confidence than we seem willing to repose in them. It is not from love of the worse, but from lack of knowledge of the better, way that they have settled down in the proximate occasion of ruin. If a hundred thousand men at a call start for the bat-

tle-field to die, why should not a hundred thousand men, for their souls' sake and for the love of their wives and children, go out into the free country where it is possible to create a home? And if men year after year give hundreds of thousands of dollars to feed and clothe those who can never be fed or clad, why shall we despair of being able to persuade them to so use their money as to secure homes to multitudes, and yet suffer not the loss of even a cent? Or shall we admit that the Mormons, with their miscreed, are able to do a work for which we have neither heart nor strength? They have made the desert bloom by peopling it with the very poorest emigrants who could be found in Wales or Denmark, bearing often the expense of the voyage from Europe and the journey across the continent. I have heard one of their leaders proclaim, as he pointed to the homes of his people surrounded by orchards and wheat-fields, that there was the miracle of faith; that there God's garden had blossomed in the midst of a desert that stretched a thousand miles on every side. Whoever among us should propose an enterprise of so difficult a character would be set down as a madman. The project would be declared impossible, even while it unrolled itself beneath our eyes.

Was there ever anything that seemed feasible to those who had not the will to do it? Then there is that eternal philosophy of the indolent, the timid,

and the selfish, that things will take care of themselves, and that the wise should not meddle in matters in which it is easy to blunder, and where even success meets only with ingratitude. And many, too, will love to think that if this were indeed such a vital matter it would have been attended to long ago. Who are we that we should pretend to see what our fathers failed to discover? This, of course, is a deliberate closing of the eyes, the preferring darkness to light. Those who have gone before us had their work to do ; we have ours ; and, besides, emigration in its actual phase is a comparatively recent phenomenon, which has been made possible by the generous impulse that caused the American people to invite the poor and oppressed of every nation to the blessings of liberty and peace. In 1815 but two thousand persons emigrated from Great Britain, and it is little more than a quarter of a century since the rush of countless multitudes set towards these shores. The movement was at first confined to the British islands ; later it spread to Germany ; and gradually the desire to move westward is beginning to awaken in the hearts of other European peoples. It is not surprising that the full significance of these migrations was not at first understood. Still less cause for wonder is there that the bishops and priests of the United States, at a time when the Church here was yet feeble and imperfectly organ-

ized, should have set themselves, in the confusion of the onrush of millions, to do what seemed most urgent. The tide has ebbed ; those who were left on the shore have settled down, and it is plain that we are able to take a calmer and fuller survey of the field than were they. And it is abundantly evident, even apart from all the considerations which I have hitherto presented, that it is now the duty of the Church in the United States to take up this work of colonization. Let us, for the sake of argument, admit that those Catholics who, in spite of the most overwhelming evidence to the contrary, persist in maintaining that it is a hopeless task to seek to persuade our people who are already settled in the great cities and factory towns to go on the land, take the true view. Let us further grant, what is equally absurd, that, even if our people could be induced to go into the country, they are now no longer fit to lead the life of a farmer.

Conceding all this, and whatever else may be advanced to the same purpose, I still affirm that there is no greater work to-day for the Church in the United States than that of Catholic colonization. When we view the social and political condition of Europe we cannot but perceive that there are forces at work there which are preparing more fearful upheavals than those which convulsed the nations at the close of the last century. Emigration from Europe has not

ceased ; it cannot cease so long as government is possible there only when half the able-bodied men are kept under arms. These millions of soldiers make periodic wars as inevitable as is the thunderstorm when clouds of opposite electric states are brought into close proximity. And the people see more and more that in these bloody conflicts, whoever gains, they are the losers. In the midst of their troubles the United States will seem to them, as it has seemed to millions of others, a safe refuge. The present condition of Ireland especially justifies the opinion that we are on the eve of another exodus from that unhappy island, and we may expect also an increasing tide of emigration to set in from other parts of Catholic Europe. Now, are we, a great and well-organized Church, to remain passive and to take no steps to give proper direction to this new influx of Catholic population? The cities are already overcrowded ; and if the poor Catholics of the Old World are to land here only to sink into surroundings of vice and immorality, then indeed is this country to be but the Church's graveyard. But if we take hold of this subject in a vigorous manner, and devise plans by which the Catholic peasantry of Europe may be enabled to become American farmers, we shall doubtless meet with generous co-operation among the wealthy and intelligent members of the Church in the countries from which we receive our immigrants.

The bishops and priests of Ireland see their people come to America with regret, because they know the moral dangers to which they will be here exposed. If we can present this subject of Catholic colonization to them in a satisfactory light we shall have succeeded in removing a grave objection from their minds. It is not expected that they should know the resources of the United States, or understand the opportunities and possibilities that exist here ; and hence they are not able to give their people practical advice as to what course they should pursue upon landing in America. To tell them to go upon the land is too general an advice to be of service, and it might lead them, if they are abandoned to themselves, to settle far from church and priest. But with the aid of colonization societies and bureaus of information in the cities where the emigrants arrive, we shall be able to offer them an easy and effective plan for giving the best direction to Catholic emigration. And, as I shall show in another chapter, there is no reason why the hoarded capital of Catholics in Europe should not seek investment in American colonization enterprises, which, properly directed, offer at once the best financial security and the opportunity of doing the greatest amount of good. Why should the Italians, for example, who come to the United States be allowed to perish in New York, Chicago, and other cities, when a few hundred thou-



sand dollars rightly employed, under the supervision of American bishops, would secure for them homes on the land, and make at the same time a fair return to those who advance the money? The same persons who are so ready to believe that it is impossible to get the Irish to do anything, except when they are hired to work for others, will at once cry out that it is hopeless to try to make anything out of the Italian immigrants. Let us listen to the words of Mr. Evarts, the present Secretary of State, who surely will not be suspected of any leaning towards Catholics. The quotation which I make is taken from the letter which he has prefixed to the *Reports from the United States Consuls on the State of Labor in Europe*, 1879.

"In the United States," he says, "and in the principal countries of Europe also, the idea of labor proper is, to a great extent, associated in the common mind with the Scandinavians, the British, the Germans, and the French; the Italians and the Spaniards, in that same mind, being sentimentally connected with that labor which basks in the sun and resorts to agriculture only when forced by their necessities. The Italian, in an especial manner, is always associated with musical itineracy and all that lazy life which goes to complete the round of strolling vagabondage. . . . That nothing can be more erroneous than the foregoing ideas in regard to the labor population of



Italy will be duly appreciated by the most casual perusal of the reports from that country, herewith submitted. These reports bear ample evidence of the fact that the working-classes of Italy are as industrious, as frugal, and as patient under privations as any peasant population in Europe, and that her artisans and mechanics stand on a par with their class elsewhere."

Only the superficial or the prejudiced are unable to see the fine qualities of the Italians. Like the Irish, they are chiefly an agricultural people, since Italy is not a manufacturing country, and they are less prepared than almost any other people to meet the temptations of the coarse and vicious life of our great cities. In Texas and elsewhere we have precisely the climate that would suit them, and the opportunity of obtaining millions of acres of good land at nominal prices. Who has ever seen finer farming than on the plains of Lombardy; or who will doubt that a man who grows rich by selling peanuts will make a thrifty tiller of the soil? The present condition of the Italians in the United States cannot but fill the heart of a Catholic with bitter thoughts; and if their cause were earnestly taken up in Italy it would greatly help on the general work of Catholic colonization in the United States.

## VII.

## CATHOLIC COLONIZATION.

THE planting of colonies may be said to be a natural accompaniment of civilization. The instinctive movement of barbarous hordes towards fairer climates and wider battle and hunting grounds partakes only in a remote manner of the character of colonization, which supposes a settled state of life as its basis, and some conscious aim as its purpose. Many causes have led to the foundation of colonies. Among the Phœnicians they were the result of the spirit of commercial enterprise; and among the Greeks this same spirit, together with civil wars and the pressure of population in a small country, led to the settlement of new territories. The practical Romans reduced colonization to a system, which was placed under the authority and direction of the state. Cicero calls the Roman colonies *propugnacula imperii*, the outposts of the empire; and they served not only as a defence against the incursions of barbarians, but also as an effective means of spreading the language and civilization of Rome over a great part of Europe. The revival of letters and the discovery

of America in the fifteenth century hurried all the leading nations of Europe into those enterprises of colonization which have changed the face of the earth. Spain and Portugal planted colonies in South America, in Central America, in Mexico, in the West Indies, and in India proper ; France took possession of portions of North America and of some of the West India islands ; and Great Britain engaged in similar enterprises which were destined to extend the language and the spirit of England over half the world.

The colonies in North America, however, which a hundred years ago coalesced into the United States, were planted and nurtured into prosperous and vigorous life more by the energy and courage of individuals than by the favor of the British Government. They sprang, indeed, in nearly every instance from a desire to escape the political and religious intolerance of England ; and though the Crown gave charters and land-grants, its policy with regard to these colonies always continued to be selfish and narrow, until it finally drove them to make declaration of independence. It was in one of these colonies, founded and built up by the enterprise and courage of individuals, with a purpose directly religious, that the cradle of the Catholic Church in the United States was placed. As the American people were originally colonists and the descend-

ants of colonizers, the policy of the Government naturally favored colonization; and as the almost boundless extent of unoccupied territory belonging to the United States made it unnecessary to seek outlets for population beyond the limits of the republic, public attention was turned to the development of a system of what may be called internal colonization, which, by the organization of Territories and the encouragement of immigration by offering one hundred and sixty acres of land to actual settlers, has greatly contributed to that westward progress of civilization which has been the most rapid and the most magnificent in the history of mankind. It was a part of this policy also to make land-grants to financial corporations, in order to encourage the building of railroads in parts of the country which were as yet too thinly populated to justify the entering upon such enterprises without the aid of Government. As this legislation was the expression of the popular will, it was a strong evidence of the agricultural instincts of the people, and the wonderful results which have followed are to be attributed more to the colonizing habit that is inborn in the American than to the stimulus and help of wise laws. There was an army of pioneers always in advance of legislative action, who served as scouts and sentinels to the multitudes that were more slowly following in the paths which they had opened. The work of settling new territories

was often carried on by communities of families. When reports reached the older States of the splendid opportunities offered in some distant part of the country, a lively interest was awakened, which led to further enquiries. In certain neighborhoods, where the desire to emigrate was strong, two or three representative men were generally chosen and sent out to examine the ground and to select a site for a colony; and when they had fulfilled their mission to the general satisfaction, a few families, bound together by ties of blood or old acquaintanceship, went out to take possession of their new homes. Others soon followed, and in a few years those who had been neighbors in the East had formed a thriving and well-organized community on the outskirts of civilization in the Far West. Each settlement became a nucleus around which an increasing and mixed population soon gathered, so that often its original character was wholly merged in the larger growth. This method commended itself especially to the better class of colonists, who were anxious to preserve their religious faith and family traditions. In this way many New Englanders have gone West, planting their communities of families from New York to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains; in this way the Virginians took possession of parts of Kentucky and other States; and in this way also the little Catholic colony of Maryland

spread into Kentucky, and thence into Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas. The descendants of the first American Catholics have settled down almost invariably in communities of their own, so as to be able to have a church and schools, and thus to continue the traditions of the faith for love of which their forefathers fled across the seas; and a careful study of their history would go far to show that, where the life of the Catholic family is surrounded by some such protection as this, Americans will be as docile children of the Church as are anywhere to be found.

This method of colonization is not, however, peculiar to Americans. There are in the West communities of Germans, of Swedes, and Russians that have been formed in this manner, which, in fact, seems to be, of all others, the most natural and commendable. What is more natural than that those who are driven by persecution or poverty, or whatever other cause, to seek homes for themselves in a strange land, often in the midst of a wide wilderness, should desire to be surrounded by their friends and brethren? And what is more likely than this to give them heart to face the dangers and endure the hardships of frontier life? And, above all, will not these surroundings offer them the best means of preserving their faith and of bringing up their children in the love and fear of God?

These are the thoughts, so far as I am able to understand, which underlie our present attempts at Catholic colonization. It is a most fortunate circumstance that these efforts are directly in the line of our national development, and in harmony both with the spirit and the interests of the country. The practical good sense which is characteristic of the American people makes them look with favor upon the growth of a farming population, even in cases in which religious or national prejudice would tend to warp the judgment. They know the farmer's good qualities; that he is conservative, jealous of his rights, the enemy of corruption and the friend of liberty. It is not he who will make appeal to the strong arm of arbitrary power to defend him against the mob. Hence, in placing our people upon the land under favorable conditions we shall have the endorsement of that public opinion which approves of the growth of a stable and thrifty population. The encouragement given to these enterprises is most perceptible in the States and Territories in which the work is carried on. There the spirit of material progress is so pronounced, and the resources of the country so apparently unlimited and so little developed, that whoever helps on the general movement is considered a benefactor; and I am quite persuaded that if even the Chinese would settle upon the land and identify themselves permanently with



the interests of American life, the present outcry against them would die away without an echo. There is certainly no excuse for any of our own people who may be connected with this mob-agitation against the Chinese. If they cannot compete with them in the labor market they could go upon the land and attain to a position which is not within the reach of a hired servant; and they should remember that we ourselves have so often been the victims of lawlessness that no circumstances should ever have power to make us believe in mob-violence as a remedy for any evil.

A small number of Irish Catholics—about eight in every hundred—in the United States are, as I have already stated, occupied in the cultivation of the soil, and they are, as a class, as industrious and prosperous as any farmers in America. It will occur to many that the cause of their success lies in qualities which they possess, but which are not common to the whole race. They, it will be said, are the chosen few who, by reason of their courage and skill, were specially adapted to this mode of life, and it would be illogical to argue that the masses of their countrymen would in the same circumstances have thriven also. There has been here, it will be argued, a sort of natural selection which has placed upon the land the better sort of immigrants, leaving the others to drift into the tenement-houses and factory mills.



This reasoning may be specious, but it is false in fact. The settlement of Irish Catholics upon the land has been, in a great measure, the result of accident. They have followed the line of canals and railways as day-laborers; and it often happened that when the work was finished the wages were spent, and the workmen found themselves in the midst of a fertile and thinly-peopled country where land was to be had for the taking. Even then the many set out for the nearest town or point where work was to be had, while the few remained behind to secure for themselves a home; and in this way chiefly were formed the nuclei of those agricultural Catholic communities which have since, in most instances, grown to be of importance. Occasionally some thoughtful and kind-hearted priest who followed these bands of migratory laborers put himself to trouble to induce them to settle down and take possession of the land; and the absence of priests was certainly one cause which prevented so many from taking advantage of the opportunities offered them.

Among those who, at a comparatively early day, perceived the importance of making special efforts to colonize the Irish Catholic immigrants, I place first two French bishops, who belong to the noble band of apostolic men whom France sent forth to build up God's kingdom in the New World. The names of

these pioneers of Catholic colonization are Mathias Loras, the first bishop of Dubuque, and Joseph Cre-  
tin, the first bishop of St. Paul. The territory con-  
fided to the care of Bishop Loras at the time of his  
consecration, in 1837, embraced the whole region  
which now forms the States of Iowa and Minne-  
sota. In this extensive see there was but one priest  
and a single church. But he had an eye that sees,  
and he beheld the time when millions of people  
would make for themselves happy homes on these  
fertile prairies. He had a map, on which he mark-  
ed the places where some day Catholic churches  
would be built; and I have been told that, so just  
was his view, his prediction has in nearly every  
instance been verified. He went further, and, at a  
time when the price of land was nominal, he se-  
cured sites for churches, schools, and convents. He  
perceived that in the West there existed precisely  
those conditions of climate and soil which are most  
favorable to the success of agricultural colonies,  
and he set himself to work to promote Catholic  
immigration. He published articles in the news-  
papers, both in this country and in Europe, in which  
he fully explained the advantages offered to immi-  
grants in these Territories. Through these publica-  
tions he created a lively interest, which soon de-  
veloped into an extensive correspondence with per-  
sons in various parts of the country who desired fur-

ther information concerning the lands of the West. Occasionally a number of families would write asking him to select a site for a colony ; and the work grew upon him so rapidly that he soon found it necessary to spend the greater part of his time in travelling from point to point to provide for the spiritual and temporal wants of these settlers. With a wisdom and foresight the beneficent results of which experience more and more confirms, he introduced total abstinence into his colonies, giving himself the example by refusing to taste alcoholic liquors. In 1851 his vast diocese was divided, and the Rev. Joseph Cretin, whom Bishop Loras had brought out from France and imbued with his spirit, was placed over the new see, which was located at St. Paul. Bishop Cretin entered with zeal into the work of forming colonies in Minnesota ; and he also made use of the Catholic press in order to bring this subject properly before the public. His praises of the soil and climate of Minnesota, of its limpid streams and beautiful lakes, of the delightfulness of even its winter weather, must have seemed excessive to those who were unacquainted with that favored region. "Believe me, sirs," he writes at the close of one of his letters to the *Freeman's Journal* in 1853, "that in these statements I have no other view but to give testimony to the truth itself, and to guide to a safe place the many destitute emigrants who are

lingering on your shores, and perishing, body and soul, in your Babylon." \*

How successful these efforts were the fact that in a single year, 1856, the Catholic population of Minnesota was doubled is of itself sufficient to show. And I think that in no other States is there relatively such a large number of Irish farmers as in Iowa and Minnesota; and for this exceptionally healthful state of things we are indebted to the wisdom and courage of these two noble apostles, whose names are in benediction.

There were, of course, many others who engaged more or less actively, and with more or less success, in this great work. Bishop Fenwick, of Boston, established a colony of Irish Catholics in Maine; but in a State so poorly adapted to agriculture it was not to be expected that an undertaking of this kind would grow to be important. Bishop Byrne also made an effort to form Catholic settlements in Arkansas; but the presence of slavery, together with lack of proper organization, caused dissatisfaction among the emigrants, many of whom went further north and took land in Iowa.

Of the colonization scheme of 1857, and of the cause of its partial failure, I have already spoken. Then came the civil war, which was followed by a period of wild speculation and over-production, creat-

\* Vide Clarke's *Lives of Deceased Bishops*, vol. ii. pp. 124 and 429.

ing a demand for work at good wages. So long as employment was easily found and the price of labor was high, the poorer classes of the cities and factory towns were not disposed to give heed to the arguments of those who might seek to persuade them to settle upon the cheap lands of the West. But the commercial crisis of 1873 ushered in a period of distress and misery which seemed harder to bear because the laboring classes, during the flush times that followed the war, had contracted habits of extravagance and luxury; and as the very serious nature of this crisis came to be fully understood the hearts of multitudes were moved with the desire to go out and take possession of the land. It is estimated that two millions of people have gone from the older States westward during the last six years; and the movement seems not yet to have reached its height. From 1875 to 1878 Kansas alone added two hundred thousand souls to her population, and the increase in Nebraska and Minnesota has been nearly as rapid. The amount of Government land disposed of in Nebraska in the last three years is shown in the following table:

|                                          |              |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of acres disposed of, 1877, . . . | 255,249,51   |
| “ “ “ 1878, . . .                        | 614,773,99   |
| “ “ “ 1879, . . .                        | 1,181,681,68 |
| <hr/>                                    |              |
| Total for three years, . . .             | 2,051,705,18 |

The sales of land in the same State made by the Union Pacific Railroad were the following :

|                             |   |   |   |   |            |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Number of acres sold, 1877, | . | . | . | . | 69,015,87  |
| “ “ “ 1878,                 | . | . | . | . | 318,903,47 |
| “ “ “ 1879,                 | . | . | . | . | 243,337,43 |

The sales of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad in Nebraska for 1878 were 511,609 acres ; and for 1879, 360,000 acres. The General Land Office of the United States, from 1875 to 1877, disposed of from 3,500,000 to 4,000,000 acres of land each year. For the year ending June 30, 1878, the quantity disposed of was 7,166,974 acres, and for the twelve months ending June 30, 1879, 8,650,119 acres.

When we add to this the vast quantities of railroad lands which have been sold during the same period we are irresistibly struck by the immense and multitudinous rush for the cheap lands of the country. In the presence of this mighty movement argument ceases. It is the greatest and most important fact in our contemporaneous history. That Eastern periodicals should send out correspondents with instructions to draw disheartening pictures of the hardships and failures which are incidental to the labor of developing new countries and extending the boundaries of civilization, was to be expected ; but it is an idle task. They might as well hope to frighten back the inflowing tide by whoopings and

outcries from the shore. Masses of human beings, like inert bodies, move along the line of least resistance and greatest attraction; and it would be as wise to attempt to make the water flow backward to its source as to seek to impede the onward march of population from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

During the last nineteen years—that is, since 1860—the population of the South has increased something over four millions; that of the Eastern States a little less than four millions; while the nine Western States (excluding Ohio) have added nearly eight millions of inhabitants to their population. In 1879 Illinois alone raised three times as much corn as all the Eastern States and as much as all the Southern States. In 1878 the Eastern States raised 47,000,000 bushels of wheat, the Southern States 40,000,000; and Illinois alone in 1879 raised 45,000,000 bushels. It is a serious mistake to imagine that the West is devoted exclusively to agriculture; its manufacturing interests are already very great, and when we consider its resources it is plain that the time is fast approaching when New England will not be able to compete with the West in working up the raw material. When we call to mind the territorial distribution and the occupations of the great body of the Catholics in the United States, it seems to have been inevitable that the stoppages of work and the lowering of wages which followed the crisis of 1873 should have turned



the attention of large numbers of them to the cheap lands of the West. They, of all others, felt most the pressure which gave a new impulse to the national movement of population of which I have just spoken ; and it certainly would have been altogether strange had they been the only class that felt no desire to own the soil and found permanent homes for themselves. The revival of interest, therefore, in the subject of emigration and colonization among our people during the last four or five years is to be attributed to general causes ; and it is to this awakened interest that the present efforts to systematize and facilitate colonization owe their existence.

In this movement the place of honor belongs to Bishop Ireland, of Minnesota, who has inherited the spirit and the mission of the first bishop of St. Paul. He is placed in a position altogether favorable to the great work to which he has devoted himself. He is in the very heart of the great Northwest, where the most marked and rapid development of population has now fairly begun. In Minnesota, along with a healthful climate and fertile soil, there is still abundance of cheap land, nearly all of which, however, belongs to railroad corporations, as the Government lands have been for the most part disposed of. Bishop Ireland opened his first colony in 1876, in Swift County, Minnesota. His working plan, which is the same for all his colonies, is very simple. He



selects a tract of land of fifty or a hundred thousand acres, the exclusive right to dispose of which for three years is given to him by the railroad company. Through a bureau, which he has organized for this purpose, he brings these lands, with full details as to price and conditions of sale, to the notice of Catholics who may desire to secure homes. He chooses a priest, with a special view to his knowledge of farming and farm life, to preside over the new colony. He is on the ground to receive the first settler, who upon his arrival finds a father and a friend. The church is the first building put up, and around this the earliest colonists choose their lands. Town sites are laid out at proper distances along the line of the railroad. In a few weeks after the colony is opened there is a post-office and a country store, but no saloon. The lumber to build the cottages of the settlers is brought by the railroad at reduced rates. Farms are selected in advance for those who, properly recommended, write to declare their intention of becoming colonists.

The country is a rolling prairie. No trees are to be felled, no roads are to be made, and, as there is a herd law in these Western States, no fences are built. The one difficulty which makes the beginning tedious is the necessity of ploughing the wild prairie a year in advance of sowing the first crop, as the roots of the grass that has been growing for centuries hold the upturned sod in a compact and matted mass,

which will break up only after it has been frozen and thawed. Vegetables and corn, however, can be raised after the first ploughing. When those who have bought farms so desire, the priest has twenty or thirty acres of each farm ploughed the summer before their arrival, so that when they come they begin at once to sow their wheat, and in four months reap the harvest. The farming is of the most elementary kind. Everything is done by machinery which is so simple that a man learns to handle it in a day. Care, moreover, is taken to intersperse practical farmers among the mechanics and city people ; and as great good-will prevails, those who have skill are ready to train their less fortunate neighbors. Then the priest is always there to give counsel and to inspire a cheerful and hopeful spirit. Six or seven years are given to make payment for the land, and the price of purchase is received by the railroad company in instalments and with a low rate of interest. It often happens that a single crop sells for more than the entire cost of the land. As the country is wholly free from malaria, sickness is almost unknown, and this most active cause of discouragement and failure in new settlements is therefore absent. From the very beginning there is generally a daily mail, which enables the colonists to keep up old and dear associations with their friends and kindred at home.

These are the leading features in Bishop Ireland's

plan of colonization, the wisdom of which has now been established beyond all doubt by its almost perfect success. None are invited to come until they have made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the conditions and all the details of the new mode of life upon which they are about to enter ; and hence the gratifying and surprising result that of those who have remained a month not one per cent. have abandoned the colony. I am able from personal observation to bear testimony to the cheerful and contented spirit that prevails in these new Catholic communities of Minnesota. Another important result of Bishop Ireland's efforts is the practical demonstration of the fallacy of maintaining that persons who have lived long in cities, and who have been occupied in factories or in mechanical trades, will not succeed in agricultural colonies. In these settlements almost every condition of life, from banking to mining, is represented. There are colonists from the cotton and woollen mills of Massachusetts, from the coal-mines of Pennsylvania, and from the tenement-houses and saloons of New York and Boston ; and it is precisely among this class that the greatest appreciation is often found of the blessings which they have found in God's open and free country. It has been proven, in fact, that even the vices which are bred in cities and factory towns generally disappear amid these healthful surroundings. The quiet, the retirement,

the family life, the personal influence of the priest, who knows each member of his flock, the almost certain hope of soon reaching independence, the effect of good example, and the heightened self-respect which comes of owning the land and being one's own master, all co-operate to develop moral character, and consequently to increase the power to overcome the helplessness which often results from long-indulged vicious habits.

It is now four years since Bishop Ireland began his work, and he has already opened his fifth colony. He has placed over three hundred thousand acres of the most fertile land in the possession of Catholics, who are living in thriving communities, many of them having already paid for their farms. Considerable villages have sprung up already in these colonies ; grist-mills have been built, and flour is sent directly from Swift County to Liverpool. At the railroad depots the farmers find at all times a market for their grain, and the hardships which they have to endure are but little greater than the sufferings of the same class in the older States. Bishop Ireland's second colony was established in Big Stone County, Minnesota, where in three months, during the spring of 1878, he located one hundred and seventy-five families on Government lands. In this short space of time a church was erected, one hundred and fifty cottages were built on the claims, and around each

cottage from five to ten acres of ground were ploughed. The colonists arrived in time to plant their corn and vegetables, and the yield was sufficient to support them during the winter. They then ploughed from twenty to thirty acres more on each farm, which they sowed with wheat the following spring. When the colony was founded the nearest railroad depot was some twenty-five miles distant, but trains are now running into the very heart of the settlement.

It is not necessary to say anything of the other colonies of Minnesota, as they are all organized and operated upon the same plan, and have all proven equally successful. I shall merely advert to a few practical considerations which Bishop Ireland has presented in his pamphlet on Catholic colonization. Settlers, he says, should arrive in the spring, not later than the beginning of May. He invites only those who desire to become farmers. He holds out no inducements to merchants, mechanics, and professional men. To settle under favorable conditions a family should bring about five hundred dollars to meet the expenses of building a cottage and buying the indispensable implements of agriculture. Those who come from the city or factory mill are warned that the country will seem to them, for a time, bleak and lonely, and if they are timid and cowardly he advises them to put all thought of his colonies out of

mind. The head of the family is told that the better plan is to go out at first alone, and examine everything thoroughly himself, and then, if he is satisfied, to bring on his family. These practical directions conclude with the following words : " If your wife is very much opposed to going upon land do not come out. A discontented wife on a new farm is far worse than the Colorado beetle. But if she urges you to go ; if in this matter she thinks of your welfare and that of her children rather than of the society of the gossips she will leave behind her ; if she says to you, ' We will have the children out of harm's way, anyhow,' then come with a brave heart, and the smile of the true wife and mother shall be as a sunbeam in your prairie home."

Catholic colonization during the last few years has not been confined to Minnesota. Successful colonies have been established in Kansas, Nebraska, Virginia, and Arkansas ; and societies for the promotion of emigration and colonization have been formed in several of the large cities of the Union, which have not only helped to build up colonies, but have done good service in bringing this subject to the knowledge of the laboring classes. I have spoken at greater length of Bishop Ireland's work, because what he has accomplished is more fully known to me, and because his plan is, in my judgment, better than any other with which I am acquainted.

## VIII.

## THE IRISH CATHOLIC COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

HUMAN beings overflow into fertile and thinly-peopled districts as naturally as the compressed air expands into the rarer surrounding medium when the obstacle is removed. It is certain also that in these new countries labor is more productive than elsewhere, and consequently that capital may be employed there to better advantage than in more thickly-settled regions. This is the meaning of the often-quoted words of Stuart Mill. "There needs be no hesitation," he says, "in affirming that colonization in the present state of the world is the best affair of business in which the capital of an old and wealthy country can engage." \*

The success of a colony depends, in the first place, upon the physical conditions of the territory—its climate and its products. A true colony can be founded only in a climate which will permit the settler to establish a permanent home which he may transmit to his children. Where the climate

\* *Principles of Polit. Economy*, vol. ii. p. 594.



will not allow him to undergo the labor of cultivating the soil and tending his flocks without serious injury to health, an agricultural or pastoral colony cannot arise. A commercial colony or a plantation colony may come into existence under these conditions ; but those who build up such colonies are generally adventurers, who hope to amass wealth and then return home. It was the climate that threatened the destruction of the Virginia colony during the latter years of Elizabeth's reign. It was this that rendered abortive the efforts of Choiseul to colonize Guiana. The French colony of Tehuantepec, the Belgian colony in Guatemala, the German colonies in Chili and Brazil, and other settlements of Europeans in Central and South America, have all felt the fatal influence of an unfavorable climate. Indeed, it would seem that some of the governments of Europe have deliberately placed their colonies in surroundings which almost certainly entail failure and death, with a view to throw discredit upon colonization, in the hope of thereby deterring their subjects from emigrating.

The climatic conditions of the States and Territories of the Northwest which are now open to settlers could hardly be better. The death-rate in Minnesota, Nebraska, and Dakota is probably lower than in any other part of the country. These regions are almost wholly free from malaria, and many of those



who have settled there and helped to develop civilization went out in the beginning in search of health. The farming of these States is of the kind that requires the least amount of capital, and the products are those from which the cultivator may hope to derive the greatest profit. "The greatest advantage," says Stuart Mill, "from foreign trade is derived by the country for whose products there is the greatest demand abroad, and one which is most susceptible of increase by additional cheapness. In so far as the productions of a country possess this property it is able to obtain the commodities of other countries at less cost."

A good climate and a fertile soil do not, however, ensure the success of a colony. It is not enough to place a number of men in the presence of savage nature and bid them take care of themselves. There is a work of preparation which is indispensable, and without which we cannot hope for good results. How to do this work of preparation is a problem which has received great attention from European statesmen. The British Government has made use of convict labor for this purpose by establishing penal colonies in regions which are thought to be suitable for the settlement of Europeans, and employing these criminals in the work of clearing the ground and making roads. It is in this way that the flourishing colonies of Australasia have been planted. Mr.

Gladstone, while Secretary for the Colonies during the second ministry of Sir Robert Peel, elaborated a plan for doing this work of preparation which attracted a great deal of notice at the time. He held that the state should, at its own expense, clear the forests, determine the sites of towns, and build churches, schools, and inns. When this had been done the English navy, he thought, should be employed to carry out emigrants without charge. He proposed to open a colony on this plan in South Africa, in the neighborhood of Natal, but was prevented from carrying out his design by the dissolution of the Peel ministry.

The work of preparation which is indispensably necessary, according to M. Leroy-Beaulieu, who has given much thought to this subject, is comprised under the three following heads : The building of roads ; the surveying of the land, which includes the marking off the number of acres each settler is allowed to take or buy ; and the construction of ports and harbors. The clearing of the ground and the erection of buildings he would leave to the colonists themselves.

In our Western States and Territories this work of preparation has been performed partly by nature, and the rest has been admirably done by the United State Government. On the rolling prairies of the Far West there are no forests to be felled, and the

whole country is a natural highway. In Minnesota and Nebraska the roads are in good condition within a few hours after the heaviest rains. Railways are built ahead of population, so that the settlers always find a market for their produce. The United States land-survey, with the system of dividing up the country into townships with sections of one mile square, containing six hundred and forty acres each, is so perfect that writers on this subject have no hesitation in affirming that it cannot be improved. Disputes about titles and boundaries, which have such a hurtful influence upon the settlement of a new country, are done away with by this system. There can, of course, be no question here of constructing harbors.

The work of preparation being complete, the next subject for consideration relates to the manner of disposing of the land. The gratuitous distribution of a certain number of acres to each colonist would seem to be the mode most favorable to the settlers; and yet the best authorities are agreed that the sale of the colonial lands at a fixed price is altogether preferable to the system of free grants. In the first place, there are conditions necessarily attached to such grants which hamper the liberty of action of the settler. He is required to put up a house, or to plant so many trees, or to bring a certain number of acres under cultivation, or to pass such a length of time on the place; and his tenure is rendered more or less preca-

rious by the ease with which these obligations are violated. Men naturally desire to have an unconditional and irrevocable title to their property, and therefore generally prefer to pay for it rather than to get it for nothing when the concession is accompanied by onerous conditions.

When we consider the work of preparation which has been done in the West, and this marked preference for an absolute and unconditional title, even when a considerable sum must be paid to acquire it, we readily perceive how easy and profitable it may be for financial corporations to engage in the business of colonization by taking advantage of the conditions under which the problem is presented in our remote States and Territories. In the first place, as the labor of a man in these new settlements is four times as productive as in older countries, it is at once manifest that he can afford to pay a high rate of interest for the money which is advanced in order to enable him to carry on his work. The truth of this proposition has been proven by Alexander von Humboldt in a manner that leaves no room for doubt. In new settlements man's whole energy is devoted to production, and the opportunity of attaining to a position of independence creates so strong a desire to save that habits of economy become general. There is, indeed, no temptation to luxury or extravagance in these simple agricultural communities. The growth of the colony

is very rapid, not only because new accessions are constantly arriving from without, but also on account of the unusually large number of births. We have a striking example of this in the French population of Lower Canada, where there has been scarcely any immigration, and which from 1763 to 1861 increased from 70,000 to 1,110,480. In older and well-settled countries population, according to the usual estimate, where no special and exciting causes of growth exist, doubles in about a hundred years; whereas we have here a sixteenfold increase in less than that time. In an agricultural colony a numerous offspring forms part of the wealth of a family, whereas children are a heavy burden to the poor in towns and cities.

Nothing is more hurtful to the progress of a new settlement than the too great dispersion of the colonists which, when things are left to take their course, is generally found to exist. A great object which Wakefield proposed to himself in his celebrated system of colonization was to find a remedy for this evil. Now, it is one of the special advantages of a wisely-organized financial colonization society that it is able with ease to accomplish this end.

It was the knowledge of these facts, together with the deep conviction of the urgent need of doing something to help to bring about a redistribution of our Catholic population, that led to the formation of the Irish Catholic Colonization Society of the United

States, which is a joint-stock company with a capital of one hundred thousand dollars. Its history is told in a very few words. The St. Patrick's Society of Chicago took the initiative by issuing invitations to a National Conference to consider the subject of Irish Catholic Colonization, and to be held in that city on the 17th of March, 1879. The conference assembled on the appointed day, with a numerous and representative attendance; and it was admitted on all sides that there was urgent need of devising some practical means whereby the settlement of our people upon the cheap lands of the States and Territories of the Union might be facilitated and increased. But as deliberation is hardly possible in a large and hurried meeting, it was deemed advisable to appoint a committee, to be composed of bishops, priests, and laymen, with power to give definite shape to the general thought of the Conference. This was accordingly done, and the committee met in Chicago on the 18th of April, 1879, and again on the 20th of May following, and, after long discussions and consultations, finally determined to form and incorporate, under the laws of Illinois, a joint-stock company, to be known as "THE IRISH CATHOLIC COLONIZATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES."

The object of the Association, as set forth in the act of incorporation, is "to promote, encourage, and assist the settlement of Irish Catholic citizens and

immigrants on the lands in the States and Territories of the United States." The capital of the company is to be used in the purchase of lands, which are resold to colonists on advantageous terms, and yet so as to secure to the stockholders a fair return upon their investment. The Association, moreover, builds an emigrant-house, a church and priest's residence in each colony, and, in certain cases, advances the money to plough twenty or thirty acres on each farm—the average price being about two dollars per acre—and also to put up cottages at a cost of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars each. The farm, with these improvements, is sold to the settler on time, and the Association secures itself from loss by retaining the title until full payment shall have been made. The colonies are established exclusively on railroad lands, which, when bought in large tracts and for cash, are frequently sold for less than half the price which the settler who buys a small farm on time would have to pay. In this way the Association can afford to resell on time at a much higher rate than it paid, and yet give to the colonist exceptionally favorable conditions, besides the social and religious privileges which it secures to him. For every hundred dollars invested it draws interest at six per cent. on, say, one hundred and fifty dollars, so that the business is not only safe but profitable. The secretary is the only officer in the Association who receives a



salary, and the only outlay of money for which no return is made is the amount spent in the erection of an emigrant-house and provisional church—a sum equivalent to from three to four thousand dollars.

Though the motive which prompted the action of the men who organized this company was, I may say, exclusively religious and benevolent, yet their whole endeavor was to place the enterprise upon a purely business basis, since they were persuaded that in this way they could most easily and certainly attain the object aimed at. It would be a perfectly safe proceeding to buy fifty or a hundred thousand acres of land in Minnesota or Nebraska at the prices at which it is offered, and then simply to await the advent of population and consequent rise in value. The Association buys the land, and, instead of trusting to the incoming tide of immigration, puts the colonists on it at once, and consequently has an immediate sale at a fair price. But, it may be asked, is it certain to find settlers in sufficient numbers?

There can be no doubt as to the answer which must be given to this question. The Catholic colonies which have been founded during the last few years have not been able to offer as great inducements to immigrants as this Association offers, and yet they have been rapidly filled. The correspondence of the Colonization Bureau at St. Paul revealed the fact that the very great number of Irish



Catholics who desire to settle upon the land have not the amount of money which is required in order to be able to take farms in the Minnesota colonies, and yet they are neither thriftless nor wholly destitute of means. If some plan can be devised, then, by which the numerous class of persons who have as much as three or four hundred dollars, and are anxious to get homes, can be placed upon the land under favorable conditions, the work of colonization will thereby be greatly extended, and thousands of deserving families will be rescued from the danger of ruin, and placed where both their temporal and eternal interests will be safeguarded.

Now, the Irish Catholic Colonization Association has been organized with a view to meet the wants of this class of settlers, who, upon their arrival, find a cottage ready to receive them, and thirty acres of ground prepared for the seed ; and yet they are not humiliated by being made the recipients of a charity, but will in due time pay both for their land and these improvements. The ability to reach this very numerous class ensures the rapid sale and settlement of the lands of the Association, though its colonists are not at all exclusively of the poorer sort.

This, however, is not the only means which this company proposes to use in order to give a wider development to the work of Catholic colonization. As its aims are national and not sectional, and as its

directors, both lay and cleric, are to some extent representative Catholics, it will be able to bring this whole subject clearly and effectively to the attention of the public, and thus to awaken greater interest in the question of colonization not only among the classes who ought to make homes for themselves on the land, but also among those whose duty it is to give practical encouragement and aid to this movement by investing a portion of their wealth in enterprises which are not only safe, but which are besides opportunities that invite co-operation in the noblest work of religion and philanthropy. Through its central office in Chicago the Association is prepared to give full and trustworthy information concerning available lands in all parts of the country, and to answer all questions as to climate, soil, crops, health, approximate cost of making settlement, and other points which emigrants may desire to learn before making choice of a home. In addition to this it is proposed, by writings, lectures, and meetings, to seek to educate Catholic public opinion on this subject, since without the aid of this ruler of the world, to use Pascal's expression, no great end can be attained.

It has not entered into the minds of those who have formed this Association to imagine that the plan is faultless or that it is the best ; it is simply the best which they were able, in the circumstances, to devise.

They pass no judgment upon those who are striving by other means to accomplish the same end, and they fully expect that, when more serious thought shall have been given to this subject, greater light will be thrown upon the methods which are most suitable for bringing about a better distribution of our population. I am persuaded, for example, that the principles of co-operation, which now receive so much attention from political economists, may be applied with success to the work of colonization, above all when this work is in the hands of so perfect an organization as the Catholic Church. Nothing would be easier than to introduce into our colonies some of the features, at least, of co-operative farming. The settlers, for instance, may choose their lands in such locations as will allow ten or twenty or more small farmers to unite in the purchase and use of labor-saving machines which one alone could not buy ; and this beginning of co-operation, if found satisfactory, would tend of itself to develop into a more perfect system. The pecuniary gain to be hoped for from such combinations would be of less value than the social and moral privileges which this intimate union of sympathy and work would confer upon the colonists. A section, which is a mile square, is usually divided into four farms of one hundred and sixty acres each, and the houses need never be placed further than a quarter of a mile apart.

This is the plan followed in the erection of the cottages which the Association has built in the Adrian colony in Minnesota. In this way the social intercourse of neighbors is greatly facilitated and the loneliness of country life diminished. Each farm is a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide ; and as the herd laws of Minnesota and Nebraska do away with the need of fencing, co-operative farming suggests itself at once as the simplest and cheapest way of cultivating the soil.

The capital stock of the Irish Catholic Colonization Society is \$100,000. The direct results to be hoped for from the employment of so trifling a sum of money in a work of such magnitude cannot but be unimportant ; and this was fully appreciated by those who fixed upon this amount. They thought it wiser, however, to begin with a small capital, for two reasons. In the first place, however well matured in all its details the plan may be, the enterprise must necessarily to some extent, at least in the public apprehension, partake of the nature of an experiment ; and it is the part of prudence, therefore, not to make the risk unnecessarily great. Another reason, and probably a better one, was the serious doubt whether it would be possible to get subscribers to a capital stock which would be somewhat in keeping with the greatness of the work in hand. This doubt has been more than justified by the extraordinary efforts which it

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was found necessary to make in order to raise among the Catholics of the United States even one hundred thousand dollars for the purposes of colonization. The publication of the object and plan of the Association, together with a succinct but clear statement of the reasons which proved this to be a safe investment, had no effect whatever in calling forth active co-operation, although the leading Catholic newspapers took up the subject and urged its importance upon their readers. Nothing remained but to make personal appeals in the large cities of the country, and several bishops were deputed to do this work. It was thought that when the subject would be brought in all its fulness to the attention of the wealthier and more intelligent Catholics, public spirit and sympathy, however feeble, with the masses of their countrymen would lead them to take interest enough in the matter to subscribe for at least a considerable part of the stock. Only here and there, however, was one found who seemed to take interest in the question or to comprehend the urgent need of helping on the movement. Stronger evidence could not be desired of the dearth of large and enlightened views among wealthy Catholics on the work and wants of the Church in the United States. Even the better sort seem to have little idea of anything that reaches beyond a parish charity. In order to raise the capital stock it was found necessary to hold mass meetings in

various cities, so as to give the poor an opportunity of subscribing for single shares. The money has been called in and certificates have been issued to the subscribers. The Association has bought ten thousand acres of land in Minnesota and twenty-five thousand in Nebraska. In the Minnesota colony the farms have all been sold, and the land in the Nebraska colony, which has just been opened, will without doubt be taken up in a very short time.

All this, of course, is merely a beginning, which in itself is unimportant enough. The intention has not been to do a great work, but to show how a great work may be done. If experience, which is the only sufficient test in such matters, proves the feasibility of this mode of colonization, then it may be confidently hoped that millions instead of thousands of dollars will seek investment in enterprises of this kind, and that by this means an impulse and extension will be given to the work of redistribution of population which will gradually infuse new energy and health into the Irish race and the Catholic religion in the United States.

A joint-stock company, similar in every respect to the one of which I have spoken, except that its capital is smaller and its aims local, was organized in St. Paul three years ago; and the colony which it has founded is thoroughly successful, while the property which it now holds represents more than double the

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amount of the capital originally invested in the business. In fact, when we consider the subject attentively it is plain that failure can result only from culpable mismanagement or dishonesty. The climate, the soil, the terms of purchase, the kind of tillage, the products, the general and pre-existing work of preparation, the accessibility of markets, and the spirit of the local legislation and government are all favorable to the planting of colonies, which, after all, is only a part of a general work that myriads of individual forces are doing with success and in the midst of greater difficulties. Even in the worst years the failure of crops is only partial, so that the colonist always raises enough to support his family until the next harvest; and when any misfortune from drought or other cause befalls him the time for making payment or meeting interest is prolonged. In the plan of the Irish Catholic Association, which is substantially that upon which Bishop Ireland's colonies are organized, with the advantage of more thorough preparation, the probability of mismanagement is so remote that it need hardly be considered at all. The colony is placed under the immediate supervision of the bishop in whose diocese the land lies. He, with the approval of the Association, appoints the priest who is to take charge of the work. The ground is examined, section by section, before purchase. The site for the church and village, which



is generally determined by nature or the position of the railroad, is agreed upon in advance. The colonists, upon their arrival, find the priest waiting for them, who conducts them either to their own cottages, standing in readiness, or else to the emigrant-house, where they remain until their own is built. They reach the colony at seed-time and, in a few days are busy planting their gardens and sowing wheat. If temptation to discouragement comes the priest and the church are there to inspire confidence.

The power of religion in these primitive surroundings and in the presence of rude nature is almost incredibly great. Then there are no saloons, no lounging-places where the indolent or discontented can gather to nurse and foster their troubles. On Sundays the entire community meets at church ; and as they come from every part of the country and from all sorts of past experiences, the interest which they take in one another is heightened by the novelty of views that have the coloring of many lands and many modes of life. A new world soon grows up here. These first-comers perceive that they have a creative power ; that, instead of being the slaves of wages, they are now to be the founders of an independent community in the great human family. Their self-importance is thereby greatly increased, and they rise to the dignity of a new character.



Their grandchildren, even though their fathers were not convicts, will be able to say, like many a Virginian, that they belong to the first families. Henceforth they will not be the tools of a bar-room caucus. They control their own communal affairs ; they own the soil, and they must see that the country is well governed. There is room now for the play of imagination. The colonist beholds himself the founder of a family. Those who bear his name will date their nobility from this brave ancestor, and men and women from high positions will look back to him as the fountain-head of those virtues which have given them worth and prominence.

There is less reason even to fear failure from dishonesty than from mismanagement. Although the character of the persons who control the business of the Association is in itself a sufficient warrant that all its dealings will be carried on with perfect fairness and justice, yet in addition to this every prudent precaution is taken to prevent even the possibility of the misappropriation of any of its funds. It is not rash, therefore, to assume the complete and thorough success of this enterprise, and we may confidently hope that this is but the beginning of a work which is destined to exert a wide-spread and beneficent influence.

## IX.

## CONCLUSION.

IN these few pages I have touched upon a subject which deserves the serious attention of Catholics and Irishmen in America—I might say, indeed, of all Americans. We have here an empire to develop, and the forces which have accelerated its growth are not necessarily those which secure the permanence of the institutions upon which so much of our well-being and happiness depends. There are tendencies in our social life which it is impossible to contemplate without anxiety. The rapid decay of religious faith, the sinking of morality, the loss of patriotism, the increasing dishonesty of politics, the coarseness and impiety of much of the literature which is the mental nourishment of the masses, the selfishness which looks only to present enjoyment, are not symptomatic of health. Spiritual ends are, with us, habitually sacrificed to material interests, and hence we have no high ideals, no lofty aims, no infinite hopes. The poor, educated in a society which believes that wealth is the highest good, are losing sight

of the Great God, and begin to feel their physical wretchedness to be more than they can bear. Hence they conspire throughout Christendom against an order of things which, if the positive philosophy is based upon a true theory, must be contemplated with horror and hatred. If faith in a higher life is to continue to grow weaker, then will those anti-social movements which are bringing the laboring classes into fierce conflict with kings and rulers and men of wealth grow stronger ; and who can say without rashness that in the disorders which must inevitably follow much that is best in our civilization will not perish utterly ?

The optimistic view of progress, in our day, is based upon the supposed power of mental instruction to sustain morality, upon which the whole social order rests. But it is now abundantly evident to all who care to see that knowing and doing are not only distinct, but belong to different spheres of existence. The man who yields to lust, anger, drunkenness, knows full well that these passions are not only wrong, but hurtful to the bodily life even. This knowledge, however, does not influence his action. The heart is reached and character is created through the imagination rather than through the reason. The most carefully drawn deductions leave us cold and indifferent ; but the voice of faith inspires the courage that makes martyrs and heroes. Knowledge oc-

cupies the mind, it does not form it ; whereas faith and love create character. Now, the whole tendency of our social life is to substitute knowledge for faith. Intellectual activity increases, but the unseen is put more and more out of mind. Corresponding to this spiritual disintegration there is a material movement of the social organism which widens the chasm between rich and poor. On one side are the millionaires, on the other a population of slaves and beggars. In parts of Europe these slaves and beggars have sharpened intellects and no faith in God or the soul. They are Socialists, Communists, and Nihilists, and would gladly put nitro-glycerine under every throne and rich man's house in the world. If you or I were slaves and beggars, with sharpened intellects and no faith in God or the soul, their thoughts and hates would be ours. Their mental and moral state is the necessary result of what society has made them. This insanity has already made its appearance in our own great cities.

Pauperism, which half a century ago had no existence here, seems to be already as inveterate and ineradicable as in the Old World ; and with it the dangerous classes—to use the accepted phrase—have come into startling prominence. In New York and other cities of the Union professional criminals increase more rapidly than the population ; and we have already a whole people of va-

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grants, commonly known as tramps, in whom the moral sense seems to have perished. The common-school education, especially in the cities, tends to create in the young a dislike for mechanical trades, which are, moreover, being superseded by the continuous improvements in machinery. These young men, who are too proud to work, and who, at the start, are ashamed to beg, overcrowd the professions or seek clerical work; and as the consequent glut in these walks throws the vast number of them upon the street, they take to sharp practice, and soon find their way into the common herd of the vicious. Outside the Catholic Church the poor in the American cities have no religion; and as they are quick-witted, they must inevitably fall a prey to the anti-social passions of the age. "The influence of the churches and of religion," says a non-Catholic American writer whose essays have attracted attention, "upon the morals and conduct of men has greatly declined, and is still declining. . . . Religion is not extinct, but the really significant fact here is that it is constantly losing ground. The empire of religion over human conduct, its power as a conservative moral and social force, is so far lost that some things which are indispensable to the existence of society can no longer be supplied from this source without a great increase of vitality in religion itself. The

morality based upon the religion popularly professed has, to a fatal extent, broken down." \*

But there is no vital source of morality except religion; and if the popular religious beliefs of Americans have lost their efficacy no further evidence of inevitable moral decay is needed. That knowledge is not such a source I have already pointed out; that what is called culture, in which Americans are lacking, is not, is confessed by those who proclaim its other virtues. Knowledge gives increase of power for good or evil. What use a man will make of it depends upon conditions which knowledge does not supply. Wealth is provocative of luxury and indulgence, and other habits which take from the will the temper that is essential to morality. The doctrine of brotherly love, which is highly thought of in certain schools of unbelief, is the most farcical of absurdities when advocated by those who deny God and the soul. Whence, then, in the Protestant view, or in the view of the unbeliever, is help to come?

Is it possible to rest content while the masses of our people are crowded together in these great cities, where criminals increase faster than the population, where the poor who are not Catholics have already lost all faith, where lust stares in the face of innocence on every street-corner, where the news-

\* *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1878.

papers are filled with all the corrupting details of every filthy crime that is committed in the land? So far their faith has preserved them from atheistic communism; but are we justified in feeling confident that they are in no danger of contamination from this moral contagion? The Molly Maguire assassinations in Pennsylvania show how easily in certain surroundings our people fall victims to the snares of the designing; and some of the publications which are intended for Irish Catholics, and are read by them, belong unmistakably to the school of socialism. Even their enemies must admit, however, that, in spite of very strong temptations, there is no people in Europe or America so free from the taint of communistic infidelity as the Irish. But in their present surroundings in this country it is impossible that they should not be drawn into the labor agitations, which tend more and more to assume the character of socialism.

Is it not the part of wisdom, then, to seek to remove from the dangers of this suicidal conflict those who will listen to us and who are nearest to us? Even if the evil should go no further than strikes and trades-unions, this will be enough to undermine the moral character of our people and to wean them from the Church. They are in the midst of temptations for which their life at home has not prepared them. They are exposed to a fierce and remorseless compe-

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tition to which they are not equal. They are placed in surroundings in which their very virtues become the occasion of poverty and sin. Is there no word which we can speak to them that is better than boasting of the days that are gone never to return—better than declaiming against the wrongs that have been, and in part still are? This is the second home of the Irish people. Here their descendants are to dwell; here their blood is to mingle with that of all the races of Europe. Here they are to fulfil their great mission. Whatever fate the future may have in store for the Isle of Destiny, the past cannot be undone. Ireland is henceforth for ever united to England by bonds that are stronger than any political union. Her language is English. This is the tongue in which are treasured up the noble thoughts of her orators and poets; her laws are English, and would remain so even if England should cease to exist. The bravery of her sons has borne a great part in spreading the power of England throughout the earth, and all this and much besides cannot be undone by any possible revolution. Here in America is a Greater England, and here, too, must Ireland do her highest work. The cause in the old home is sacred, and all who love justice and liberty must give their hearts' deepest sympathy to those who there are struggling upward slowly to the light and free air. But here, too, is an Irish cause which is Catholic. Shall we never



understand that our people even here are not yet free, and shall we neglect the work that lies at our hand? Or is it possible for us to be content to see our people remain in their present surroundings, hired servants and the slaves of wages, while all other races are seeking homes on the cheap lands? The opportunities which now exist are rapidly passing away, and if we discuss and object for the next ten years the question of colonization will have solved itself, and nothing shall be left for us to do except not to despair.

There is not a priest in the whole country who may not become an active worker in this cause; for everywhere a few Catholics at least are found who are leading a migratory life, keeping railroads in repair, or laboring in villages, or working as hired hands in shops and business houses. Now, if priests everywhere would take upon themselves the duty of warning against the dangers of such a mode of life, pointing out at the same time how easy it is to establish a settled home in the midst of one's countrymen, where the young will grow up in the observance of all the old traditions of faith and purity, it certainly would not be rash to hope for vast results from such preaching. I do not think there is a better way of inculcating morality than to persuade people to seek those surroundings which of themselves tend to promote religious earnestness and purity of conduct.

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My own limited experience is proof sufficient for myself, at least, that the number of Catholics who are anxious to get a thorough knowledge of this question of colonization is very great. What they read awakens interest but does not satisfy them. The laboring man is slow to realize what he hears or reads of, and many doubts and difficulties present themselves to his mind which a tract or book cannot explain. He needs some one who is thoroughly familiar with the subject in all its details, and with whom he can talk at his ease and with the full confidence that he is his friend. When he has once rightly understood the matter he will in turn become a persuader of others ; and so the good work tends of itself to thrive. From the priest, however, the impulse should come. To take upon one's self the office of adviser, and in a weighty matter, is undeniably to assume a responsibility which may involve much that is annoying. Not all who go out to a colony can succeed. No amount of foresight or care can prevent individual failures where large numbers are concerned ; and when ill health or a bad season, or some untoward accident, has brought misery upon a family, it is human to find fault with those who, by counsel or persuasion, led to an undertaking which has proven unfortunate. But this, after all, signifies nothing more than that those who take an active part in a work like this must have courage. If annoy-

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ance, or even some accidental misery, frightens them they are not of the seed of those men through whom salvation is wrought in Israel. He is a poor general who lets slip the opportunity of a great victory from fear of the loss of a few men. And then those who fail in the attempt to rescue themselves and their families from the uncertainty and wretchedness of a drifting life cannot by any chance be in much worse condition than they were before, and can therefore have no great cause for complaint. It is safe to urge all men who have families and no home to go where they can make one; and though half of them should perish in the migration, yet would a great and holy work have been accomplished. And when we are warned of the risk of advising city people to go out to a new country to become farmers, we make reply that those to whom we address ourselves were nearly all born and brought up in the country; and as for their children, it is the privilege of the young to be able to bend themselves to all modes of life.

The chief object to be gained in making use of financial corporations for the purpose of planting colonies is, as I have already stated, the power which they secure of extending aid to persons who, without some help of this kind, would not be able to settle on the land. To enlarge still further the work of colonization, other methods might be employed in connection with these financial associa-

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tions. And I know of no better plan than the one which has been made use of with success by the Catholics of Canada, who have shown great aptitude for systematic colonization. The work was taken up there by the bishops, who, to help on the planting of colonies, adopted a method similar to that of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith: Organizations were formed in every parish, which reported to the Central Colonization Board of each diocese. The members of the local societies were divided into decades, with a collector at the head of each band, who on Sunday handed in the contributions for the week. In this way all classes of persons were able to take an active part in the good work. The parish funds were transmitted to the Central Board, to which also the persons from different parts of the diocese who were recommended as colonists worthy of assistance were sent. Many poor and deserving families were by this means put in a position to become independent, whereas if they had simply been made the recipients of a charity they would have remained a burden upon the parish, and the children would, in all probability, have gone to ruin. But this was a very small part of the good work accomplished by these organizations. An interested curiosity followed the poor settlers who had been sent out to the colony, and the pastor occasionally gave tidings of them

from the pulpit. Their success awakened in their former neighbors and acquaintances a desire to take advantage of the opportunity to secure a home, while the knowledge of the good that was being done made those who were able to give still more generous.

One need not be very observant to perceive that an effort to form diocesan organizations of this kind in the United States would have the eager co-operation of thousands of our people. Here and there parishes have already established colonization societies of their own, one of which has secured thirty thousand acres of land in Kansas, where it has established a thriving colony. A single association of this kind is worth a hundred St. Vincent de Paul Societies. Why should not every large parish in the great cities either have a colonization society of its own or co-operate with some existing colony, in order to secure homes every year for a certain number of poor families in the congregation? Money thus invested would accumulate; for these poor families would in the course of a few years be able to pay for the land and the improvements, and in this way each parish would gradually create a fund for securing homes for the poor. And why might not an annual collection be taken up for this same object in all the churches of the United States? The money thus raised could be entrusted to a

Board of National Colonization, having power to employ it to secure homes on the land for families which the different pastors might recommend as deserving of help. A board of this kind could either open colonies of its own or have a certain number of acres reserved for its purposes in colonies established by other organizations. This annual collection would bring the subject of colonization, in a full and clear statement, before the whole Catholic people of the United States, once every year at least ; and, in addition to this, the reports of the board, which would be published in all Catholic newspapers, would contain the most useful information for those who might desire to secure homes for themselves.

Whether or not these suggestions have any value I shall leave to the judgment of others. But as to the great importance of the Colonization Movement there cannot, it would seem, be two opinions.

AMID IRISH SCENES,

AND

English Rule in Ireland.





## AMID IRISH SCENES.

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### I.

THE very thought of a journey to distant lands is invigorating. We throw off the dust of old habits, quit the routine of daily life, shut out the customary thoughts of business, and, with hearts that in some mysterious way seem suddenly to have grown younger, turn towards other worlds. Even the uncertainty which is incident to travel has a peculiar charm. The love we bear our country and friends grows warmer and assumes unwonted tenderness when we leave them, not knowing whether it will be given us to look upon their sweet faces again ; and as the distance widens, the bonds of affection are drawn closer. Amid strange scenes we reflect how sweet it is to dwell with those who love us ; a thousand thoughts of home and friends come back to us, the heart is humanized, and we resolve to become more worthy of blessings for which we have been so little grateful. Indeed, I think that the chiefest pleasure of travel is in the thought and hope of commu-

nicating to others our own impressions of all the lovely things we see.

Who would care to look on blue mountains, or ocean sunset, or green isles, if he might never speak of their beauty, never utter the deep feelings which they awaken? All strong emotion, whether of joy or sorrow, seeks to express itself. Nature is beautiful only when we associate it with God or man. No greater torment can be imagined than to think and feel, and yet to live alone for ever with that which has no thought or feeling. I remained in Ireland too short a time to be able to form well-founded opinions or to reach just conclusions concerning the present condition or the future prospects of the country. I was compelled to travel hurriedly, and therefore observed superficially; and in my haste I doubtless often failed to remark what was most worthy of attention. At least, I approached the sacred island with reverence. Whatever I might see, I knew that my feet were upon holy ground, and that I was in the midst of the most Catholic people on earth; I felt that if sympathy could give insight or reveal beauty, I should not look in vain.

And now, with the liberty and quickness of thought, passing the vast expanse of ocean, I shall place myself at Oban, on the western coast of Scotland, opposite the island of Mull; for though we are not here on Irish soil, yet this whole region is so full

of Irish memories and Irish glories that we may not pass it in silence. The scenery is sombre, bleak, and wild. It is not lovely nor yet sublime, though there is about it a kind of gloomy and desolate grandeur; and, indeed, this is the general character of all scenery in the Scotch Highlands. It is rugged, harsh, and waste. It does not invite to repose. Amid these barren moors and fog-covered hills we are chilled, driven back upon ourselves. We involuntarily move on, content with a passing glance at dark glens and lochs from whose waters crags and peaks lift their heads and frown in stern defiance. The gloomy tales of murder and treachery, of war and strife, and the ruined castles which tell of battles of other days, deepen the impressions made by nature's harsh aspect. Even in summer the air is heavy with mist and fog. A day rarely passes without rain, and in the middle of August the traveller finds himself in an atmosphere as damp, cold, and dreary as that of London in November. Before us is the dark sea of the Hebrides, from whose sullen waters a hundred naked and desert islands rise in rough and jagged outlines. As we sail through the narrow straits of this archipelago we see nothing but barren rocks, covered with black fog. There is no grass, there are no pleasant landscapes, no cultivated fields. We hear only the moaning of the waves, the howling wind, and the hoarse cry of the sea-bird. Nothing could

be less beautiful or less attractive ; and yet it is in this wild sea and among these rocky islands that we find the sacred spot from which Scotland and northern England received religion and civilization. During the summer a boat leaves Oban every morning to make the tour of the island of Mull, taking Staffa and Iona in the route. The steamer stops at Staffa to permit tourists to visit the Cave of Fingal, of which so much has been written. This cave, which is about seventy feet high and forty feet in width, with a depth of two hundred and thirty feet, opens into the ocean on the southern coast of the little island of Staffa. Its front and sides are formed of innumerable columns of basaltic rock, precisely similar to those which are found in the Giant's Causeway. They are perfectly symmetrical, and one is almost tempted to think they must have been shaped by the hand of man. But, apart from this peculiarity, the only thing which struck me as very remarkable in this celebrated cave is the mighty surge of the ocean, whose angry waves, rushing into this gloomy vault, dash against its everlasting columns, and, with wild and furious roar that reverberates along the high arch in tones of thunder, are driven back, to be followed by others, and still others. And so all day long and through the night, from year to year, this concert of the waves far from human ears chants God's awful majesty and infinite power.

Nine miles south of Staffa lies Iona, St. Columba's blessed isle. "We were now," wrote Dr. Johnson one hundred years ago, "treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavored, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

It was in 563, more than thirteen hundred years ago, that Columkille, a voluntary exile from Erin, which he loved with more than woman's tenderness, landed upon this island. Twelve of his Irish monks had accompanied him, resolved to share his exile. Others soon followed, drawn by the fame of his sanctity, and in a little while Columkille and his apostles issued forth from Iona to carry the religion of Christ

to the pagans who dwelt on the surrounding islands and on the mainland of Scotland; and from this little island the light of faith spread throughout the Caledonian regions. All the churches of Scotland looked to it as the source whence they had received God's choicest gifts, and for two hundred years the abbots who succeeded St. Columba held spiritual dominion over the whole country. The Scottish kings chose Iona as their burial-place, in the hope of escaping the doom foretold in the prophecy :

“ Seven years before that awful day  
When time shall be no more,  
A watery deluge will o’ersweep  
Hibernia’s mossy shore ;  
The green-clad Isla, too, shall sink,  
While with the great and good  
Columba’s happy isle shall rear  
Her towers above the flood.”

In an age of ferocious manners and continual war this holy and peaceful isle, far removed from scenes of strife and blood, might well be regarded not only as the fit resting-place of the dead, but as the happiest home of the living.

Even to-day, in its loneliness and desolation, there is a calm, sweet look about it that makes one linger as loath to quit so sacred a spot. But the simple, great ones of old are gone; their bones lie buried beneath our feet.

“ To each voyager  
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store  
Of wave-worn pebbles. . . .  
How sad a welcome !  
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir,  
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.”

A few poor fishermen with their families dwell upon the island. They are all Protestants. After the Reformation, the Calvinistic Synod of Argyll handed over all the sacred edifices of Iona to a horde of pillagers, who plundered and destroyed them. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these ruins were given up to the ignorant inhabitants of the island, who turned the cathedral into a stable, used the church of the convent of canonesses as a quarry, and broke and threw into the sea nearly all of the three hundred and sixty crosses which formerly covered the island.

As late as 1594 the three great mausoleums of the kings were to be seen, with the following inscriptions:

Tumulus regum Scotiæ,  
Tumulus regum Hiberniæ,  
Tumulus regum Norwegiæ.

But these have also disappeared, and nothing remains but the site. Here were buried forty-eight kings of Scotland, four kings of Ireland, and eight kings of Norway ; and it is even said that one of the kings of France found here a last resting-place. Macbeth closes the line of Scottish kings who were buried in

Iona. His successor, Malcolm Canmore, chose the Abbey of Dunfermline as the royal cemetery. Shakspeare does not fail to send Duncan's body to Iona :

“ ROSSE. Where is Duncan's body ?

MACDUFF. Carried to Colmekill,

The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,

And guardian of their bones.”

There are still many tombs in this cemetery, most of which are covered with slabs of blue stone upon which figures are sculptured in relief. Here a bishop or an abbot, in cope and mitre, holds the pastoral staff of authority, and by his side lies some famous chieftain in full armor. On one of these slabs the traveller may behold the effigy of Angus MacDonald, Scott's Lord of the Isles, and the contemporary of Robert Bruce.

In the centre of the graveyard stands the ruin of a chapel which was built at the close of the eleventh century by St. Margaret of Scotland, and dedicated to St. Oran, the first Irish monk who died in Iona after the landing of St. Columba. Near by is the ancient Irish cross which is said to mark the spot where St. Columba rested on the eve of his death, when he had walked forth to take a last view of his well-beloved island. A little farther north lies the cathedral, ruined and roofless, with its square tower, which is the first object to attract the eye of the pilgrim as he approaches the sacred isle. Iona is but three miles



in length and about two miles wide. Unlike the islands by which it is surrounded, it has a sandy beach, which slopes to the water's edge, and its highest point is but little over three hundred feet above the level of the sea. The ruins all lie on the eastern shore, and are but a few paces from one another. Some little care is taken of them, now that the facilities of travel have turned the attention of travellers to this former home of learning and religion. The chapel of the nunnery is no longer used as a cow-house, nor the cathedral as a stable, as in the time of Dr. Johnson's visit. Nevertheless, many interesting relics which he saw have since disappeared. Still, enough remains to awaken emotion in the breasts of those whom the thought of noble deeds and heroic lives can move. In treading this sacred soil, and walking among the graves of kings and princes of the church, surrounded by broken walls and crumbling arches which once sheltered saints and heroes, we are lifted by the very genius of the place into a higher world. The present vanishes. The past comes back to us, and throws its light into the dim and awful future. How mean and contemptible seem to us the rivalries and ambitions of men ! This handful of earth, girt round by the sea, holds the glories of a thousand years. All their beauty is faded. They are bare and naked as these broken walls, to which not even the sheltering ivy clings. The voice

of battle is hushed ; the song of victory is silent ; the strong are fallen ; the valiant are dead, and around forgotten graves old ocean chants the funeral dirge. Monuments of death mark all human triumphs. And yet St. Columba and his grand old monks are not wholly dead. To them more than to the poet belongs the *non omnis moriar*. Their spirit lives even in us, if we are Christians and trust the larger hope. What heavenly privilege, like them, to be free, and in the desert and ocean's waste to find the possibility of the diviner life ; like them, to be strong, leaning upon God only ! The very rocks they looked upon seem to have gained a human sense ; in the air is the presence of unseen spirits, and the waves approach gently as in reverence for the shore pressed by their feet. To have stood, though but for a moment and almost as in a dream, amid these sacred shrines, is good for the soul. It is as if we had gone to the house of one who loved us, and found that he was dead. The world seems less beautiful, but God is nearer and heaven more real.

We have lingered too long among the ruins of Iona. Our ship puffs her sail, and we must go ; but our faces are still turned towards the blessed isle ; the cathedral tower rises sadly over the bleak shore, and in a little while the rough and rock-bound coast of the Ross of Mull takes the vision from our eyes.

And now I am in Ireland. Landing at Belfast, I went south to Dublin; thence to Wicklow, where I took a jaunting-car and drove through the Devil's Glen, to Glendalough, through Glenmalure and the Vale of Avoca, and back to Wicklow.

Returning to Dublin, I went southwest to the Lakes of Killarney, passing through nearly the entire extent of the island from east and west. Having made the tour of the lakes and visited Muckross Abbey and Ross Castle, I went to Cork, where I took the train for Youghal, on the Blackwater. I sailed up this beautiful river to Cappoquin, near Lismore. From this point I visited the Trappist monastery of Mt. Melleray. Again taking a jaunting-car, I drove over the Knockmeledown Mountains into Tipperary, along the lovely banks of the river Suir, into Clonmel, thence to Cashel, to Holy Cross Abbey and to Thurles. Returning to Cork, I of course visited Blarney Castle, and then, sailing down the noble sea-avenue that leads to Queenstown, went aboard the steamer which was to bring me home again.

In Rome, it has been said, none are strangers. So much of what is greatest and best in the history of the human race centres there that all men instinctively identify themselves with her life and are at home. In Ireland a Catholic, no matter whence he come, forgets that he is in a foreign land; and in proportion to the love with which he cherishes his

faith is the sympathy that draws him to the people who have clung to it through more suffering and sorrow than have fallen to the lot of any other. More than other races they have loved the Church ; more than others they have believed that, so long as faith and hope and love are left to the heart, misery can never be supreme. The force with which they realize the unseen world leaves them unbroken amid the reverses and calamities of this life. They are to-day what they were in ages past—the least worldly and the most spiritual-minded people of Europe.

They live in the past and in the future ; cling to memories and cherish dreams. The ideal is to them more than the real. Their thoughts\* are on religion, on liberty, honor, justice, rather than upon gold. They fear sin more than poverty or sickness. When the mother hears of the death of her son, in some distant land, her first thought is not of him, but of his soul. Did he die as a Catholic should die, confessing his sins, trusting in God, strengthened by the sacraments ? When he left her weeping, her great trouble was the fear lest, in the far-off world to which he was going, he should forget the God of his fathers, the God of Ireland's hope ; and when in her dreams she saw him back again, her heart leaped for joy, not that he was rich or famous, but that the simple faith of other days was with him still.

The life that is to be is more than that which is.

The coldest heart is warmed by this strong faith. In the midst of this simple and pure-hearted people, so poor and so content, so wronged and so patient, so despised and so noble, one realizes the divine power of religion. Whithersoever our little systems of thought may lead us, whatsoever mysteries of nature they may reveal, nothing that they can give us could compensate for the loss of honest faith and child-like trust in God. Whatever may be, this is the best. Better to die in a hovel, yearning for God and trusting to Him, than without hope "to walk all day, like the sultan of old, in a garden of spice." The first and deepest impression made upon me in travelling through Ireland was that it is a country consecrated by unutterable suffering. The shadow of an almost divine sorrow is still upon the land. Each spot is sacred to some sad memory. Ruined castles tell how her proudest families were driven into exile or reduced to beggary; roofless cathedrals and crumbling abbeys proclaim the long martyrdom of her bishops and priests; tenantless cottages and deserted villages speak of the multitudes turned upon the road to die, or, with weary step, to seek shelter in a foreign land. We pass through desolate miles of waste lands that might be reclaimed, through whole counties that have been turned into sheep and cattle pastures, through towns once busy, now dead; and John Mitchel's cry of anguish when, in triumphal

funeral march, he went to meet the electors of Tipperary, strikes upon the ear: "My God, my God, where are my people?"

Go to the abandoned ports of Wexford, of Youghal, of Waterford, of Galway, and you will be told of ships, freighted with human souls, that sailed away and never returned. It seemed to me on those silent shores that I could still hear the wail of countless mothers, wringing their hands and weeping for the loss of children whom a cruel fate had torn from them. Was ever history so sad as Ireland's? Great calamities have befallen other nations—they have been wasted by war and famine, trodden in the dust by invading barbarians; but their evils have had an end. In Ireland the sword has never wearied of blood. "The wild deer and wolf to a covert may flee," but her people have had no refuge from famine and danger. Without home and country, they have stood for centuries with the storm of fate beating upon their devoted heads, and in their long night of woe some faint glimmer of hope has shone out, only suddenly to disappear, leaving the darkness blacker. True were the poet's words of despair:

"There are marks on the fate of each clime, there are turns  
in the fortunes of men,

But the changes of realms or the chances of time shall  
never restore thee again.

Thou art chained to the wheel of the foe by links which the world cannot sever ;

With thy tyrant through storm and through calm shalt thou go, and thy sentence is—' Banished for ever.'

" Thou art doomed for the vilest to toil ; thou art left for the proud to disdain ;

And the blood of thy sons and the wealth of thy soil shall be lavished, and lavished in vain.

Thy riches with taunts shall be taken ; thy valor with gibes is repaid ;

And of millions who see thee now sick and forsaken, not one shall stand forth in thy aid.

In the nations thy place is left void ; thou art lost in the list of the free.

Even realms, by the plague or the earthquake destroyed are revived ; but no hope is for thee."

I stood in Glendalough, by the lake

" Whose gloomy shore  
Skylark never warbles o'er."

The sun was just sinking to rest behind St. Kevin's Hill, covered with the purple heather-bloom. There was not a sound in the air, but all the mountains and the valley held their breath, as if the spirits of the monks of old were felt by them in this hour, in which, in the ages gone, the song of prayer and praise rose up to God from the hearts of believing men, and all the plain and the hillsides were vocal with sweet psalmody. Here, a thousand years ago and more, a city grew up, raised by the power of holiness. To St. Kevin flocked men who sought the



better way, and the Irish people, eternally drawn to religion and to their priests, gathered round, and Glendalough was filled with the multitude of believers. Those were the days which St. Columba sang when in far-off Iona he remembered his own sweet land: "From the high prow I look over the sea, and great tears are in my gray eye when I turn to Erin—to Erin, where the songs of the birds are so sweet, and where the monks sing like the birds; where the young are so gentle and the old so wise; where the great men are so noble to look at, and the women so fair to wed."

From St. Kevin to St. Lawrence O'Toole, Glendalough was the home of saints. When the Norman came, in the twelfth century, there was a bishop there. The hills were dotted with the hermitages of anchorets, and above the seven churches rose the round tower in imperishable strength. To-day there is left only the dreariness and loneliness of the desert. The hills that once were covered with rich forests of oak are bare and bleak; the cathedral is in ruins; the churches are crumbling walls and heaps of stones; the ground is strewn with fragments of sculptured crosses and broken pillars; and amid this wreck of a world are mingled in strange confusion the tombs of saints and princes and the graves of peasants. Still stands the round tower in lonely majesty, like a sentinel of heaven, to



watch for ever over the graves of God's people. What a weight of awe falls upon us amid these sacred monuments ! We speak not, and scarcely breathe. An unknown power draws us back into the dread bosom of the past. The freshness of life dies out of us ; we grow to the spot, and feel a kinship with stones which re-echoed the footsteps of saints, which resounded with the voice of prayer. It seems almost a sacrilege to live when the great and the good lie dead at our feet.

But why stop we here ? Is not Ireland covered with ruins as reverend and as sad as these ? Throughout the land they stand

“ As stands a lofty mind,  
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,  
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,  
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.”

What need of history's blood-stained page to tell the sad story of Ireland's wrongs and Ireland's woes ? O'Connell never spoke as speak these roofless cathedrals, these broken walls and crumbling arches, these fallen columns and shattered crosses. The traveller who in Jerusalem beholds the weary and worn children of Israel sitting in helpless grief amid the scattered stones of Solomon's Temple, need not be told how the enemies of the Holy City compassed her about ; how the sword and famine and the devouring

flame swallowed up the people ; how her walls were broken down, her holy of holies profaned, her priests slaughtered, her streets made desolate, until not a stone was left upon a stone.

The massacres of Wexford and Drogheda ; the confiscation in a single day of half the land of Ireland ; the driving her people into the ports of Munster to be shipped to regions of pestilence and death ; the expulsion of every Catholic from the rich fields of Ulster ; the exile of the whole nation beyond the Shannon ; the violated treaty of Limerick, are but episodes in this tragedy of centuries. Even the Penal Code, the most hideous and inhuman ever enacted by Christian or pagan people, tells but half the story.

That the Irish Catholic had for centuries been held in bondage by a law which violated every good and generous sentiment of the human heart, I knew. He could not vote, he could not bear witness, he could not bring suit, he could not sit on a jury, he could not go to school, he could not teach school, he could not practise law or medicine, he could not travel five miles from his home ; he could own nothing which he might not be forced to give up or renounce his faith ; he could not keep or use any kind of weapon, even in self-defence ; his children were offered bribes to betray him ; he could not hear Mass, he could not receive the sacraments ; in

his death-agony the priest might not be near to console him. All this I knew, and yet I had never realized the condition to which such inhuman legislation must reduce a people. That this Code, which Montesquieu said must have been contrived by devils, and which Burke declared to be the fittest instrument ever invented by man to degrade and destroy a nation, had failed to accomplish its fiendish purpose, I also knew. The Irish people, deprived of everything, and almost of the hope of ever having anything in this world, remained superior to fate. With a fidelity to religious conviction without example in the history of the world, they retained the chastity, the unbroken courage, the cheerful temper and generous love which had always distinguished them ; and that in travelling among them I should find it more and more impossible to doubt of this was but what I had expected. But the generous, pure, and simple character of the people only made the impression which I received of the frightful wrongs and sufferings which have been and are still inflicted upon them the more painful.

There is not in the civilized world another country where the evils of tyranny and misrule are so manifest. One cannot help but feel that Ireland does not belong to the Irish. It is not governed in their interest ; it is not made to contribute to their welfare or happiness. They are not taken into account by

its rulers ; their existence is considered accidental ; a fact which cannot be ignored, but which it is hoped time, with famine, poverty, and petty persecution such as the age allows, will eliminate. The country belongs to a few men who have no sympathy with the mass of the people, who do not even desire to have any. They are for the most part the descendants of needy adventurers who, under Elizabeth, Cromwell, and William of Orange, obtained as a reward of their servility or brutality the confiscated lands of Ireland ; or, if they belong to the ancient families, they inherit their wealth from ancestors who owed it to a double apostasy from God and their country. It was these men, and not England, who enacted the Irish Penal Code. They are the traditional enemies of Ireland, sucking out her life-blood and trampling in contempt upon her people. They have filled the land with mourning and death, with the wail of the widow and the cry of the orphan ; they have freighted the ships which have borne the Irish exiles to every land under heaven ; they have within our own memory crowded her highways with homeless and starving multitudes ; have pushed out her people to make room for sheep and cattle ; in ten years have taken from her three millions of her children. My heart grew sick of asking to whom the domains through which I was passing belonged. It seemed to me that the people

owned nothing, that the *paucis vivitur humanum genus* was truer here than ever in ancient Rome. The very houses in which the Irish peasantry live tell the sad tale that in their own country they are homeless. Like the Israelites in Egypt, they must stand with loins girt and staff in hand, ready to move at a moment's warning. If the little hut shelter them for a season, it is enough ; for another year may find them where rolls the Oregon or on the bitter plains of Australia. Ask them why they build not better houses, plant not trees and flowers, to surround with freshness and beauty that family-life which to them is so pure and so sweet ; they will answer you that they may not, they dare not. The slightest evidence of comfort would attract the greedy eye of the landlord ; the rent would be raised, and he who should presume to give such ill-example would soon be turned adrift. The great lord wants cabins which he can knock down in a day to make room for his sheep and cattle ; he wants arguments to prove that the Irish people are indolent, improvident, an inferior race, unfit for liberty. I know that there are landlords who are not heartless. The people will tell you more than you wish to hear of the goodness of Lord Nincompoop, of the charity of Lord Fiddle-faddle. The intolerable evil is that the happiness or misery of a whole people should be left to the chance of an Irish landlord not being a fool and yet

having a heart. To any other people who had suffered from an aristocracy the hundredth part of what has been borne by the Irish, the very name of "lord" would carry with it the odium of unutterable infamy ; among any other people the state of things which, in spite of all the progress that has been made, still exists in Ireland, would breed the most terrible and dangerous passions. For my own part, I could not look upon the castles and walled-in parks which everywhere met my view without feeling my heart fill with a bitterness which I could rarely detect in those with whom I spoke. What it was possible to do has been done to hide the land itself from the eyes of the people. Around Dublin you would think almost every house a prison, so carefully is it walled in. The poor, who must walk, are shut in by high and gloomy walls which forbid them even the consolation of looking upon the green hills and plains which surround that city. In the same way the landlords have taken possession of the finest scenery of the island. If you would see the Powerscourt waterfall you must send your card to the castle and graciously beg permission. People who have no cards are not supposed to be able to appreciate the beauty of one of the most picturesque spots in Ireland. At the entrance to the Devil's Glen the traveller is stopped by huge iron gates, symbolical of those which Milton has described as grating harsh thunder on

their turning hinges ; and when he thinks he is about to issue forth again into the upper air, suddenly other gates frown upon him to remind him of the *lasciati ogni speranza voi ch'entrate*, of Dante. Mr. Herbert has taken possession of half the Lakes of Killarney, and exacts a fixed toll from all who wish to see what ought to be as free to all as the air of heaven. If ten thousand dollars added to his annual income be a compensation for such meanness, he is no doubt content.

It is on the demesne of this gentleman that lies the celebrated ruin of Muckross Abbey. It stands embosomed in trees on a green slope, overlooking the Lower Lake, and commanding one of the loveliest views to be had anywhere. The taste of "the monks of old" in selecting sites for their monasteries was certainly admirable. A church was erected on this spot at a very early date, but was consumed by fire in 1192. The abbey and church, the ruins of which are now standing, were built in 1340, by one of the MacCarthys, Princes of Desmond, for Franciscan monks, who still retained possession of them at the time of Cromwell's invasion. A Latin inscription on the north wall of the choir asks the reader's prayers for Brother Thadeus Holen, who had the convent repaired in the year of our Lord 1626. That such a place should have remained in the possession of the monks for more than a century after the introduction of Protestantism is of itself enough to show to



what extent the Catholic monuments of Ireland had escaped the destroyer's hand previous to the incursion of the Cromwellian vandals. The ruins of Muckross Abbey have successfully withstood the power of Time's effacing finger. The walls, which seem to have been built to stand for ever, are as strong to-day as they were five hundred years ago ; and to render the monastery habitable nothing would be required but to replace the roof.

The library, the dormitories, the kitchen, the cellars, the refectory with its great fire-place, seem to be patiently waiting the return of the brown-robed sons of St. Francis ; and in the corridors the silence, so loved of religious souls, is felt like the presence of holy spirits. In the centre of the court-yard there is a noble yew-tree, planted by the monks centuries ago. Its boughs droop lovingly over the roofless walls to shelter them from the storm. In the church the dead are sleeping, and among them some of Ireland's princes. In the centre of the choir a modern tomb covers the vault where in ancient times the MacCarthys Mor, and later the O'Donoghue Mor of the Glens, were interred. These are the opening lines of the lengthy epitaph :

“ What more could Homer's most illustrious verse  
Or pompous Tully's stately prose rehearse  
Than what this monumental stone contains  
In death's embrace—MacCarthy Mor's remains ? ”



This abbey, like most of the other sacred ruins of Ireland, is now used as a Catholic cemetery. No Protestant is buried here. Mr Herbert, however, has got possession of it, and has secured the entrance with iron gates, which open only to golden keys. The living who enter here pay this needy gentleman a shilling, the dead half a crown. Elsewhere we find the same state of things. Even the most sacred relics of Ireland are in the hands of Protestants. It is not easy to find a more interesting collection of antiquities than that of the museum of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin ; but the pleasure which we experience in contemplating these evidences of the ancient civilization of the Irish people is mingled with pain when we see that even their holiest relics have been taken from them and given to those who have no sympathy with the struggles and triumphs with which these objects are associated. We have here, for instance, the "Sweet-sounding" bell of St. Patrick, together with its cover or shrine, which is a fine specimen of the art of the goldsmith as it flourished in Ireland before the Norman invasion. Here, too, is preserved the famous "Cross of Cong," upon which is inscribed the name of the artist by whom it was made for Turlough O'Connor, father of Roderick, the last native king of Ireland. No finer piece of work in gold is to be found in any country of Western Europe. Those

who examine it will be able to form an opinion of the state of the metallurgic and decorative arts in Ireland before she had been blessed by English civilization. Another object of even greater interest is a casket of bronze and silver which formerly enclosed a copy of the Gospels that belonged to St. Patrick. The leaves of this, the most ancient Irish manuscript, have become agglutinated through age, so that they now form a solid mass. Another manuscript, almost as ancient and not less famous, is a Latin version of the Psalms which belonged to St. Columba. This is the copy which is said to have led to the exile of the saint and to the founding of his monastery. This was the battle-book of the O'Donnells, who in war always bore it with them as their standard.

One cannot contemplate the exquisite workmanship and precious material of these book-shrines without being struck by the extraordinary care with which the ancient Irish preserved their manuscripts. These sacred relics bear testimony at once to their religious zeal and to their love of learning. They carry us back to the time when Ireland was the home of saints and doctors; when from every land those who were most eager to serve God and to improve themselves flocked to her shores, to receive there the warm welcome which her people have ever been ready to give to the stranger who comes among them

with peaceful purpose. Those were the days of her joy and her pride ; the glorious three centuries during which she held the intellectual supremacy of the world ; during which her sons were the apostles of Europe, the founders of schools, and the teachers of doctors. Never did a nation give more generously of its best and highest life than Ireland in that age. These emblems of her faith and her science are in the hands of her despoiler.

The great schools of Lismore and Armagh are no more. No more in the streets of her cities are heard all the tongues of Europe, which at matin hymn and vesper song lose themselves in the unity and harmony of the one language of the Church. They who were eager to teach all men were forbidden to learn. Knowledge was made impossible, and they were reproached with ignorance. But the end is not yet. In contemplating the past we must not forget the present, nor the future which also belongs to Ireland. The dark clouds which so long have wrapped her like a shroud are breaking. In the veins of her children the full tide of life is flowing, warm and strong, as in the day when Columba in his wicker-boat dared the fury of the waves, or Brian drove the Dane into the sea, or Malachi wore the collar of gold. They are old and yet young ; crowned with the glories of two thousand years, they look with eyes bright with

youthful hope to a future whose splendor shall make the past seem as darkness.

## II.

“I do love these ancient ruins :  
We never tread upon them but we set  
Our foot upon some rev'rend history ;  
And, questionless, here in this open court,  
Which now lies naked to the injuries  
Of stormy weather, some lie interred who  
Loved the church so well and gave so largely to 't  
They thought it should have canopied their bones  
Till doomsday.”

“There is a joy in every spot  
Made known in days of old  
New to the feet, although each tale  
A hundred times be told.”

Who has not heard of the Rock of Cashel—Cashel of the Kings? “The first object,” exclaimed Richard Lalor Sheil, “that in childhood I learned to admire was that noble ruin, an emblem as well as a memorial of Ireland, which ascends before us, at once a temple and a fortress, the seat of religion and nationality ; where councils were held, where princes assembled ; the scene of courts and of synods ; and on which it is impossible to look without feeling the heart at once elevated and touched by the noblest as well as the most solemn recollections.” From what-

ever side the traveller approaches the ancient metropolis and residence of the kings of Munster, the first object to meet his eye is the Rock, which lifts itself above the surrounding country, as proud to wear its monumental crown. From the earliest times this hill seems to have been dedicated to religion. Its Round Tower, which is still entire, would lead us to associate it with the pagan rites of the ancient Irish ; and the tradition which designates the Rock as the place where the kings of Munster were proclaimed confirms this view. It is certainly associated with the early dawn of Christianity in Ireland ; for St. Patrick, St. Declan, St. Ailbe, St. Kiran, and other holy men held a synod in Cashel.

St. Patrick's visit was in 448 ; he baptized Prince Ængus and held solemn feast in Cashel of the Kings "till all the land was clothed with Christ." Here on the Rock he gave the shamrock its immortal fame :

"From the grass  
The little three-leaved herb, stooping, I plucked,  
And preached the Trinity."

Without entering into the controversy concerning the origin of the Round Towers, we will take Cormac's Chapel to be the most ancient Christian ruin on the Rock.

This stone-roofed church was built, as is generally supposed, by Cormac McCullenan, the famous king-

bishop, who began to reign in the year 902. But Petrie is of opinion that we owe this chapel to Cormac MacCarthy, King of Munster, and that it is the Teampul Chormaic of whose solemn consecration by the archbishops and bishops of Munster, in presence of the priests, princes, and people, the Annals of Innisfallen make mention in 1134.

However this may be, all agree that the chapel is one of the most curious and interesting specimens of early Christian architecture in Ireland. Like all the stone-roofed chapels of the primitive Irish Church, it is divided into nave and chancel, with a tall, square tower at their northern and southern juncture. Within the southern tower, which on the outside is ornamented with six projecting bands, there is a stone staircase leading to apartments above the chapel said to have been occupied by King Cormac. These rooms receive the light through windows which are circular on the outside, but square within, and were heated by hot air, conveyed into them through flues in the wall—the first instance known to us of the use of a method of warming houses generally thought to be of very recent invention. The doorways leading into the chapel are in its northern and southern walls, and are richly adorned with columns, capitals, mouldings, and sculptured figures. On the lintel of the northern entrance there is a group in basso-relievo representing a Centaur in

the act of shooting a lion which is about to devour some smaller animal that is crouching at its feet. This is supposed to represent the contest between paganism and Christianity for the possession of Ireland during the repeated invasions of the Danes.

The cathedral stands between the Round Tower and Cormac's Chapel, embracing them in such way that they all seem to be but parts of one magnificent ruin. This church, which consists of a choir, nave, and transepts, with a square tower in the centre, was built by Donald O'Brien, King of Limerick, in the year 1169. Its greatest length from east to west is two hundred and ten feet, and the breadth of the transepts is a hundred and seventy feet. It is both a fortress and a church—true symbol of the perfect union of the national and the religious spirit in Ireland. The walls, which are of great thickness, are hollow, so as to afford a safe passage from one part of the building to another in case of danger. At the western end, instead of the great doorway usually found in churches, there is a massive square guard-tower of great height, resembling the fortified castles which are common throughout the kingdom.

This formerly contained a vaulted apartment having no exterior windows, and but one small entrance. Over this vault was the great room of state, which could be reached only by stairs within the walls, barely wide enough to admit one person. The roof



was surmounted by battlements and a parapet. The monuments whose ruins crown the Rock of Cashel were all built before the Saxon had set foot in Ireland, and it is impossible to look upon them without admiration for the men who called them into existence. They certainly had little to learn, in architecture at least, from the rude Norman barons who, taking advantage of the internal feuds which distracted the people, overran and subjugated the country.

It was in the year 1101 that Murtoth O'Brien, King of Munster, convened a great assembly of the clergy and people of Ireland at Cashel, "and made such an offering as king never made before him—namely, Cashel of the Kings, which he bestowed on the devout, without the intervention of a laic or an ecclesiastic, for the use of the religious of Ireland in general." We have a letter of St. Anselm to Murtoth O'Brien, in which he praises him for his excellent administration of the kingdom. His successor, Cormac MacCarthy, by whom the chapel was built, was the intimate friend of St. Malachi.

Driven from his throne by Turloagh O'Connor, King of Connaught, he refused to take up arms to regain it, but withdrew from strife and placed himself under the direction of this great saint. In his society he led a penitential life, taking no nourishment but bread and water, and wholly absorbed in heavenly contemplation. After some years he was replaced



upon the throne, and, in gratitude, built two churches at Lismore, where he had been the companion of St. Malachi, and one at Cashel of the Kings.

The most famous of the bishops of Cashel was Cormac McCullenan, who was at the same time King of Munster, and who has been considered as the founder of the chapel on the Rock which still bears his name. In his reign, which began in 902, the throne of Cashel had become almost in every respect the equal of that of Tara. No longer content with his own provincial resources, he put forth a claim to tribute from the whole southern half of Ireland. This involved him in war with the people of Leinster, who, supported by the supreme monarch, met Cormac in battle and routed his army. The king himself was slain, and his body was conveyed to Cashel for interment.

In the northern wall of the chapel there is a recess, once filled by a sarcophagus which is now in the cathedral. Upon the slab which covered this tomb the name of Cormac, King and Bishop of Munster, was inscribed in Irish characters. Within the tomb itself, when opened some years ago, there was found a bronze crosier with gilt enamel, of great beauty and exquisite finish, which from its form and style of workmanship there is good reason for believing to be as old as the chapel itself; and this has led Petrie and other Irish antiquarians to maintain that King

Cormac MacCarthy was also a bishop, though the tradition is that the tomb is not his, but that of the great Cormac McCullenan.

After Murrough O'Brien's gift of Cashel to the Church in the year 1101, its bishops gained in importance and power. In the latter half of the twelfth century the see was filled by Donald O'Heney, who was of the royal family of the Dalcassians. The Four Masters declare that he was the fountain of religion in the western part of Europe, that he was second to no Irishman of his day in wisdom and piety, and that in the Roman law he was the most learned doctor in the whole kingdom. He took part in a council held in 1097, in which Waterford was erected into a bishopric, and died in the following year.

In 1152 Pope Eugene III. sent Cardinal Paparo as legate to Ireland with authority to confer the pallium upon four of the Irish prelates. One of these was Donat O'Lonargan, Archbishop of Cashel, during the lifetime of whose immediate successor Henry II. invaded Ireland. He landed at Waterford on the 18th of October, 1171, with five hundred knights and four thousand men-at-arms, and appeared rather as a protector than as an enemy of the Irish people. From Waterford he marched with his army to Lismore, and thence to Cashel. Early in the following year, by his order, a synod was held in Cashel for the purpose of regulating ecclesiastical matters in Ireland. The

chief pretext, as is known, for the Norman invasion was the correction of abuses in the Irish Church, and it was ostensibly with a view to effect this that the council was called. Its decrees have been preserved by Giraldus Cambrensis, the eulogist of Henry and the enemy of the Irish, and, far from confirming the prevailing notion concerning the existence of grave disorders, they furnish the strongest argument in favor of the purity of the Irish Church at that time ; and even had there been serious abuses, the murderer of St. Thomas of Canterbury was, one would think, hardly a fit instrument for doing away with them.

Giraldus himself, the avowed partisan of the English and the author of innumerable falsehoods relating to Irish history, was forced to admit that the clergy were faithful in the discharge of their spiritual duties, pre-eminent in chastity, and remarkable for their exceeding abstinence from food.

“The clergy,” he says, “of this country are very commendable for religion, and, among the divers virtues which distinguish them, excel and are pre-eminent in the prerogative of chastity. They attend also diligently to their psalms and hours ; to reading and prayer ; and, remaining within the precincts of the churches, do not absent themselves from the divine offices to the celebration of which they have been appointed. They likewise pay great attention to

abstinence and sparingness of food ; so that the greatest part of them fast almost every day until dusk, and until they have completed all the canonical offices of the day."

As an offset to this confession, drawn from him unwillingly, he accuses the Irish clergy of drinking at night more than is becoming (*plusquam deceret*), but does not go the length of saying that they drank to inebriation, which, indeed, would be altogether incompatible with the virtues which he is forced to admit they possessed. Felix, Bishop of Ossory, who was present when Giraldus made this statement, resented as false his allusion to the indulgence of the Irish clergy in wine. But, even taking the account of Giraldus in its full extent, we must admit that the Irish priests, at the time of the Norman invasion, had nothing to learn from the example of the ecclesiastics who had followed the conquerors from England ; and we are inclined to hold with Lanigan that there was in that day no church in Christendom in which there were fewer abuses.

It was to Maurice, Archbishop of Cashel, who died in 1191, that Giraldus made the objection that Ireland had never had any martyrs. "It is true," replied the archbishop ; "for, though the Irish are looked upon as barbarous and uncultivated, yet have they always paid reverence and honor to priests ; nor have they ever raised their hands against the saints of

God. But now there is come amongst us a people who know how and are accustomed to make martyrs. Henceforth Ireland, like other nations, shall have her martyrs."

Giraldus has himself recorded this retort as a sharp saying. His heart would have failed him could he have looked into the future and beheld the whole people weltering in their martyr-blood; the sword always uplifted ready to strike, the land made desolate, the populous cities empty, the solemn cathedrals in ruins, the monasteries sacked and burned, until Ireland, that made no martyrs for Christ, became, for him, the great martyr-nation of all time. Cashel itself was to have its martyrs, chosen some of them from among its archbishops. Maurice Fitzgibbon, of the noble family of the earls of Desmond, filled this see when Elizabeth ascended the throne. His birth was not more eminent than his virtue. Every effort was made by the queen to induce him to prefer honors to conscience. But in vain. He spurned the royal favor which could be obtained only by the sacrifice of his faith, was arrested for refusing to take the oath of supremacy, and thrown into prison in Cork, where, after years of suffering and cruel treatment, he died on the 6th of May, 1578. His successor was Archbishop O'Hurley, who, through his mother, Honora O'Brien, was descended of the house of Thomond. A wretched informer was set to watch

him, but, through the timely warning of a friend, he escaped just as he was on the point of being delivered into the hands of the officers of the government, and found an asylum in the castle of Slane. His place of refuge was soon discovered, and Lord Slane was ordered under the heaviest penalties to bring the archbishop with the least possible delay to the Castle of Dublin. On his trial he was put to torture, in the vain hope that his excruciating sufferings might bring him to renounce his faith. In the midst of his torments his only sister was sent into his prison to add her prayers to the cruelties of his tortures. He implored her to fall upon her knees and ask pardon for so great a crime. As a last resort he was offered pardon with the promise of high honors if he would yield. The heroic martyr replied that when he had health to enjoy the world, such things had not power to move him; and now that he was weak and broken, it would be folly to deny his God for pleasures which he could not enjoy. Sentence was then passed upon him, and on the 6th of May, 1583, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, he was dragged to the place of public execution in Stephen's Green, and there hanged. His head was then cut off, and his body quartered and placed upon the four gates of the city.

The first Protestant Archbishop of Cashel was the notorious Miler Magrath, who apostatized during

the reign of Elizabeth, and whom Camden calls "a man of uncertain faith and credit, and a depraved life." During the fifty-two years of his occupancy of this see he squandered its revenues, alienated its lands, and, lest the memory of his misdeeds should perish, took care to erect in the cathedral a monument to himself to recall to succeeding generations the lavish manner in which he spent the ill-gotten goods of apostasy and servility. The epitaph, which he wrote himself, records among other things that for fifty years he worshipped England's sceptre and pleased her princes. When Donald O'Brien's grand cathedral passed into the hands of Protestant bishops, it began to be neglected. In 1647 Lord Inchiquin, one of Cromwell's generals, laid siege to it, and, after a severe bombardment, took it by storm. Twenty priests who had taken refuge in the castle retired into the vault, and the soldiers, not being able to break in the door, brought turf and made a fire, by which they were either roasted or suffocated. The western tower, which was directly exposed to the battery of Inchiquin, was greatly damaged, and after the capture the roof of the cathedral was blown off with cannon. When the troubled times of the Commonwealth had passed away, the choir was again fitted up and used for religious worship, until in 1749 the Protestant Archbishop Price abandoned this hallowed sanctuary altogether, leaving it to the mercy



of time and the elements. The groined arch underneath the belfry was broken down, and the bells were carried off to Fethard and Clonmel. The interior of the church was filled with the fragments of the fallen roof, beneath which were buried tombstones, capitals, corbels, and pillars ; and the noble Rock where for ages the heroes and saints of Ireland had dwelled and prayed, abandoned of men, was given up to the owl and the bat. In 1848, while the people were dying from hunger, the great tower, that had been battered by Cromwell's cannon, opened, and the southern half fell to the ground with a terrific crash ; but so excellent was the mortar which had been used in the building that it remained firm while the stones were shattered. The walls of the cathedral still stand firm and unshaken as the Rock on which they are built. There is no nobler ruin in Great Britain. The abbeys of Melrose, Dryburgh, and Holyrood are contemptible when compared with the Rock of Cashel. Even in its fallen state it has the lofty bearing of a king.

“ They dreamed not of a perishable life  
Who thus could build.”

When Cromwell beheld it he exclaimed : “ Ireland is a country worth fighting for.”

A fairer country, in truth, could not easily be found than that which unfolds itself beneath the eye of the



traveller who ascends the pentagon tower of the ancient castle of the kings of Munster. To the west the Golden Vale expands in tracts of emerald and gold ; to the east rich pastures and well-cultivated uplands gradually rise towards the distant hills of Kilkenny ; and on the north and the south the glorious prospect is bounded by the Slieve Bloom and Galty Mountains. In the distance, under the hill of Knockgrenagh, is the ruin which sheltered Sarsfield the night before he fell upon and destroyed the siege-train of William of Orange, which was on its way from Cashel to Limerick. In the vale under the Rock lies the noble ruin of Hore Abbey, originally founded by Benedictine monks, but transferred in 1272, by Archbishop McCarvill, to the Cistercians. He also united with it the hospital for lepers built by David le Latimer in 1230, the ruins of which may still be seen standing in a field on the road to Cahir. In 1561 Queen Elizabeth, having expelled the monks, gave the abbey with its appurtenances to Henry Radcliffe, and to-day only the roofless walls remain. While the Penal Code was in vigor no Catholic was allowed to dwell within the limits of the town of Cashel. At present, in a population of six thousand, there are but a hundred and eighty Protestants. Nevertheless, the venerable ruins of the Rock are still in the hands of the dignitaries of the Church of England. It is certainly a short-sighted and unwise policy which

thus commits the ancient sanctuaries of Ireland, so dear to the hearts of her people, to the custody of those who look upon them as relics of a superstitious faith, and prize them only as trophies of conquest. The Irish people cling to memories and are governed more than others by their affections; and so long as the English Government persists in maintaining a state of affairs which constantly places before their eyes the wrongs and outrages of which they have been the victims, so long will they be restless and dissatisfied.

To continue to allow an ecclesiastical establishment, which has never been and can never be anything else than a political contrivance for the humiliation and oppression of the Irish people, to retain possession of these shrines of religion, is a wanton insult to the double love they bear to their country and their faith. It was this twofold love, flowing in one channel, that upheld them in all the dark centuries of woe; and now that brighter days have come, England cannot fail to recognize the increasing strength of Irish patriotism and Irish faith.

Let the Rock of Cashel, with its holy ruins, its sacred tombs of kings and bishops, be given back to the people to whom it belongs. It is valueless except for its associations, and these associations are without value to the persons in whose hands it is allowed to remain. Let the glory of other days come

back to these sacred walls. Millions of Catholics in the United States would consider it an honor and a privilege to be permitted to rebuild this sanctuary of God. Again on the holy mount let the lamp of Christ's real presence burn as glowed the light that for a thousand years burned before St. Bridget's shrine. Let the swelling notes of the deep-toned organ lift again the soul to God, while mitred bishops and surpliced priests, with all the believing throng, sing forth the song of thanks and praise. In the resurrection of a people, in the new rising of a faith, let this temple, given back to God and to Ireland, stand as a commemoration.

Seven miles north of Cashel, and three miles south of Thurles, on the banks of the river Suir, lie the ruins of the Abbey of Holy Cross. A convent was built on this spot at a very early period of the Christian history of Ireland. The fame of the sanctity of the monks attracted members to the community, and also pilgrims from a distance. In 1169, two years before the Norman invasion, Donald O'Brien, King of Limerick, accompanied by a brilliant retinue, visited the place, and was led by his devotion to found and endow the abbey. The charter of foundation, one of the witnesses to which was Maurice, Archbishop of Cashel, of whom we have already made mention, opens with these words: "Donald, by the grace of God King of Limerick, to all kings,

dukes, earls, barons, knights, and Christians of whatsoever degree, throughout Ireland, perpetual greeting in Christ." This charter was afterwards confirmed by the English kings John, Henry III., Edward III., and Richard II. The abbey received its name from the possession of a portion of the true cross, which was given in 1110, by Pope Pascal II., to Donough O'Brien, King of all Ireland and grandson of Brian Boru. Princes and bishops were eager to enrich this monastery, and the fame of the miracles wrought by the sacred relic drew to it crowds of worshippers. With increasing wealth, the buildings grew in splendor and extent. The church is built in the form of a cross, with nave, chancel, and transept. At the intersection of the cross there is a lofty square tower, and in the transepts two beautifully-groined chapels. In the monastery there were eight dormitories for the monks, besides numerous chambers for the entertainment of visitors attracted by devotion ; for the laws of hospitality were never forgotten. The abbot, who was mitred, was a peer of Parliament and secular lord of the county of "The Cross of Tipperary." When Henry VIII. suppressed the great abbeys of Ireland, he granted Holy Cross, with its temporalities and also the spiritual jurisdiction, to James, Earl of Ormond and Ossory, whom he regarded with special favor. Elizabeth confirmed this grant to Thomas, Earl of Ormond, who, though edu-

cated in the Anglican schism, became a Catholic several years before his death, and left his estates to Earl Walter, a stanch defender of the faith.

The monks who had been expelled from the abbey still lingered in its neighborhood, in the hope that they might somehow be permitted to return and end their days in the sacred cloisters in which they had given to God the best part of life. At times they met by night within the hallowed enclosure to offer up the divine Sacrifice ; and when Mary ascended the throne, they once more took possession, but were again expelled by Elizabeth, and finally dispersed. The cells, dormitories, and guest-chambers, so long consecrated to meditation and all holy exercise, were converted into stables for the housing of cattle. The church, which contained the tombs of many noble families, escaped desecration, but not the ravages of time and neglect. From the year 1580 to the close of the century no priest dared appear in public throughout the province of Munster, and even the most careful disguises were not sufficient to hide them from the fury of their enemies ; but in 1600 Hugh O'Neil turned his army towards the south of Ireland, and, proceeding by slow marches, finally encamped "at the gate of the monastery of Holy Cross."

"They were not long there," say the Four Masters, "when the holy Rood was brought to them,

and the Irish gave large presents, alms, and offerings to its conservators and monks in honor of Almighty God ; and they protected and respected the monastery, with its buildings, the lands appropriated for its use, and its inhabitants in general."

The monks remained in possession of the abbey for several years, and for the first time since its suppression in 1536 an abbot of Holy Cross was chosen. The succession was kept up till the beginning of the eighteenth century, and expired in the first dark years of the Penal Code with Thomas Cogan, the last of the abbots of Holy Cross, who died on the 10th of August, 1700, and was buried in the choir of the old church, in the tomb where the bones of his predecessors are awaiting the day of resurrection.

O gray walls, sacred ruins of Holy Cross ! ye have a spirit's feeling, and work upon the soul till it forgets all glad and pleasant scenes to blend with the gloom and desolation that have come to abide with you. The gentle river still flows by, but where is the great strong life-current of faith and love that here was fed from God's eternal fount ? Cold are the burning lips of love that wore the pavement smooth ; cold the great warm hearts that beat with highest impulse of divine charity. No more from their chalices mysterious monks drink deep love of God and men ; no more at early morn is heard their matin song ; no more to heaven ascends their evening hymn. Gone

is the dim religious light that shone through mystic windows. The tapers are quenched, the belfries mute. No more floats on the breeze

“The heavenliest of all sounds  
That hill or vale prolongs or multiplies.”

The dead only are here, and around them the silence they so loved and broken walls, which, if they mourn not, make others grieve.

“Once ye were holy : ye are holy still ;  
Your spirit let me freely drink and live.”

As a monastic ruin the Abbey of Holy Cross is, in the estimation of the people, second to no other in Ireland ; and it owes this celebrity less to the beauty of its architecture than to the possession of the holy Rood.

The marble shrine in which this famous relic was preserved may still be seen in the southern transept of the church. The relic itself, at the time of the suppression of the abbey, passed into the hands of the Earl of Ormond, in whose family it remained for nearly a century, when Earl Walter gave it for safe-keeping to Dr. Fennell, who left it to James, second Duke of Ormond. It was finally deposited, in the early part of the present century, in a shrine in the chapel of the Ursuline Nuns at Blackrock, near Cork, where it is to remain “until such time as the church of the Holy Cross, with the mon-



astery of Cistercian monks attached thereto, shall be rebuilt."

Though Holy Cross is a ruin and in the hands of Protestants, the Cistercian Order still survives in Ireland in the monastery of Mount Melleray. It was, a few months ago, our privilege to pass a brief time in this sanctuary of religion, where the most unworldly life is made to subserve the highest social ends.

Mount Melleray is but a few hours' ride from Cork. The excursion is made by railway to Youghal, an ancient town, once famous in Irish history, lying near the mouth of the Blackwater. At the entrance to its splendid and picturesque harbor, now almost entirely abandoned, there stands a ruined tower, which was formerly part of a convent of nuns, who at night kept torches blazing in this lighthouse to enable vessels to enter port with safety. Near the town the house which Sir Walter Raleigh owned, and in which he lived for several years, is still pointed out to the traveller. In his garden here he planted in 1586 the first potatoes grown in Ireland.

A boat leaves Youghal twice a day and ascends the Blackwater as far as Cappoquin. The trip is made in about two hours. The scenery is unsurpassed even in Ireland. There is nothing finer on the Rhine. The river winds through fertile valleys with rich meadows and fields of waving corn, until a sudden



turn brings us into the presence of barren mountains, which, in their desolation, seem to mock the smiling prospect below. From almost every jutting rock ruined castles or churches look down upon us. In these mountains above Cappoquin, and overlooking the Blackwater, lies the Trappist monastery of Mount Melleray.

Forty-five years ago a few poor monks, driven from their peaceful home, settled here in the midst of a dreary wilderness. They had obtained from the Protestant landlord of the place six hundred acres of mountain peat-land on a lease of ninety-nine years. No one but an Irish landlord would have thought of demanding rental for what had always been a desert, and, so far as he was concerned, might for ever remain a desert. The monks, however, paid him his price and set to work to make the desert bloom. On their land there was not a tree or blade of grass, and before they could begin to plough or dig they had to go over the ground and pick up the stones with which it was covered. But for them a life of solitude was to be a life of labor, and they were not discouraged. They knew that half the soil of Europe had been reclaimed and brought under cultivation by monks, whose lives were none the less consecrated to prayer and study. Half a century has not yet passed, and the barren waste is covered with rich fields of corn and green meadows. With their own hands the monks

have built a large monastery and church, whose tall spire is seen from the whole surrounding country. In their gardens the finest vegetables grow, and in their dairy the best butter is made. A few years ago they opened a college, in which they give an excellent classical education to youths whose parents may not be able to pay the higher pensions of other institutions. The buildings are large and well provided with whatever is necessary to the health and comfort of the students ; and the food, though plain, is of the best quality. A part of the monastery is fitted up for the accommodation of guests ; and as the hospitality of the monks is well known, they are rarely without visitors, drawn thither sometimes by curiosity, but oftener by the desire of spending a few days in solitude in communion with God. In the guests' book we found the names of persons from almost every part of Europe and America. We have visited the monasteries of the Trappists in other countries, but nowhere else have we received the impressions made upon us at Mount Melleray. It was Edmund Burke who said that to his mind the Catholic Church of Ireland bore a closer resemblance than any other to the Church of the apostles ; and we could not help reflecting that these monks were more like the Fathers of the Desert than any men whom we had ever seen. How terrible is this place ! How this life of honest religion lays bare the shams and

pretexts with which weak and soft worldlings would hide the atheism of their faith! If God is all in all, and the soul more than the body, a Trappist is greater than a king. To these men the future world is more real than the present. The veil of time and space has fallen from their eyes; the immeasurable heavens break open, and God's kingdom is revealed. Divine power of the love of Christ, which makes the desert beautiful, and solitude a perpetual feast! What heavenly privilege to forget the world and to be with God only; to turn from men, not in loathing or hate or bitterness, but with a heart as sweet as a child's, and to follow Christ into the mount where the celestial glory encircles him! With St. Peter we exclaim: It is good to be here! A single day, O Lord! spent in thy tabernacles is more precious than a thousand years.

In this life in death is found a life the world dreams not of, as

“Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure  
Thrill the deepest notes of woe”;

as in the presence of the dying we see only the blackness and the gloom, when the soul already hears God's angels sing, and beholds the light that never fades.

The highest joy is of the soul, and the more it lifts itself from flesh and earth the greater is its de-

light. In these solemn walls, with their silent monks clad in white, it seemed to us that we were upon the threshold of another world, far away from the ebb and flow of men's affairs. We felt no more the feverish throb of the great world's pulse, nor heard the noisy hum of commerce or the nations' angry battle-cry. The blatant shout of Progress no longer deafened us. We were in the mood to ask ourselves : Is it not, after all has been said, progress towards death that men speak of ? Do not all the lines along which they advance converge until they meet in the grave ? But we crave life, not death. Is there no hope ? Must we join the rabble, the common herd, that stands in wonderment in the world's great toy-shop, eagerly peering at stones and metals and skins of beasts, gazing at blank walls and rattling machinery, and shouting : Ha ! this is progress ? Is there no room for the soul, no hope of life ? Is mechanism all in all, and is all progress mechanical ? Here, at least, were men who believed in the soul ; who, despising all the counsels of fear and cowardice, had turned from the world and set their faces towards the life that is and is to be. They never speak except in prayer and psalmody. They rise in the night and spend hours in the thought of God and the soul. Silently they go forth to their work, and in silence return to pray. Their bed is a board, their food bread and coarse vegetables. And so



from day to day and from year to year in their hearts they make the ascent to God.

It is easy for us to deride the life which we have not the courage or the strength to lead. These, at least, are men with brave hearts and great thoughts. They are not the creatures of circumstance, the slaves of routine, the self-satisfied and unconscious victims of the universal tyrant. They are not held by bonds of flesh and blood. No mean ambition moves them. A king's crown is but a bauble, like the toy of a child ; and whatever ceases to be has no kindred with the soul that was not born to die. They wage battle for the possession of the infinite, and in the divine struggle take on the heroic mood that makes all things possible. And we who stood for a moment on this heavenly battle-ground, a looker-on, unfit to take part in such celestial warfare, would fain have lingered on the hallowed spot, knowing full well that the world to which we turned again has no happiness even to promise like that which is found in this holy mountain where God is seen and loved.

# ENGLISH RULE IN IRELAND.

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## I.

No one can pass from England into Ireland without being struck by the contrast in the condition of the two countries—a contrast so marked and absolute that it is revealed at the first glance, and in lines so bold and rigid that it seems to have been produced by nature itself. In England there is wealth, thrift, prosperity ; in Ireland, poverty, helplessness, decay. Into the great heart of London, through arteries that stretch round the globe, the riches of the whole earth are poured. Dublin is a city of the past, and, in spite of its imposing structures, impresses us sadly. The English cities are busy marts of commerce or homes of comfort, luxury, and learning. The Irish towns are empty, silent, decayed. Into England's ports come the ships of all the nations ; but in Ireland's hardly a sail is unfurled. There the chimneys of innumerable factories shut out with their black smoke the light of heaven ; here the Round Tower or the crumbling ruin stands as a monument of death.

England is over-crowded ; in Ireland we travel for miles without meeting a human being ; pass through whole counties from which the people have disappeared to make room for cattle. Freedom is in the very air of England : the people go about their business or pleasure in a sturdy, downright way, and in a conscious security under the protection of wise laws ; in Ireland we cannot take a step without being offended by evidences of oppression and misrule. The people are disarmed and unprotected, guarded by a foreign soldiery, the servants of an alien aristocracy.

To what causes must we ascribe this wide difference in the condition of two islands, separated by a narrow strip of sea, with but slight dissimilarity of climate, and governed ostensibly for now nearly seven hundred years by the same laws ?

The explanation given universally by English writers, with the tone with which one is accustomed to affirm axiomatic truths, is based upon the dissimilarity of the two peoples in natural character and in religious faith. The Irish, they say, are by nature discontented, idle, and thriftless, and their religion is in fatal opposition to liberty and progress. The subject is worthy of our attention. Ireland is an anomaly in European history. Just at the time when the other Christian nations, after overcoming the divisions and feuds of a barbarous age, were settling down into the unity which renders harmonious de-

velopment possible, the seed of perpetual discord and never-ending strife was planted ineradicably in her soil. Three hundred years of almost incessant warfare with the Dane had left her exhausted and divided, an easy prey to the Norman barons, who introduced into her national life a foreign blood and an alien civilization.

From that day to the present time Ireland's fate has been the saddest of which history has preserved the record. There has been no peace, no liberty, no progress. Opposing races, contrary civilizations, and opposite religions have clashed in such fierce and bloody battles that we could almost fancy the furies of the abyss had been let loose to smite and scourge the doomed land. Mercy, justice, all human feelings have been banished from this struggle, which has been one of brute force and fiendish cunning. Whatever the stronger has been able to do has been done ; and there is no good reason for believing that England, in her dealings with Ireland, has ever passed one just law or redressed one wrong from a humane or honorable motive. From the conquest to the schism of Henry VIII., a period of nearly four centuries, the English colonists, entrenched within the Pale and receiving continually reinforcements from the mother-country, formed a nation within a nation, always armed and watching every opportunity to make inroads upon the possessions of the native

princes, who were not slow to return blow for blow. There was no security for life or property; the people were left to the mercy of barons and kings, to be robbed and pillaged or butchered in their broils. Nothing could be more inhuman than English legislation in Ireland during these four centuries, unless it be English legislation in Ireland during the three centuries which followed. Henry II. confiscated the whole island, dividing the land among ten of his chief followers; though they were able to hold possession of but a small part of the country. In the legal enactments and official documents of this period the term habitually used to designate the native population is "the Irish enemy." They were never spoken of except as "the wild Irish," until, as an English writer affirms, the term "wild Irish" became as familiar in the English language as the term wild beast. They were denied the title of English subjects and the protection of English law. An act, passed in the reign of Edward II., gave to the English landlords the right to dispose of the property of their Irish dependants as they might see fit. All social and commercial intercourse with the "Irish enemy" was interdicted. An Irishman if found talking with an Englishman was to be apprehended as a spy and punished as an enemy of the king; and the violation of an Irishwoman was not a crime before the law. Even exile was not permitted as a mitigation of this

misery ; for a law of Henry IV. forbade the "Irish enemy" to emigrate. There is no exaggeration in the address which the people of Ireland sent to Pope John XXII.:

"Most Holy Father," they say, "we send you some precise and truthful information concerning the state of our nation, and the wrongs which we are suffering, and which our ancestors have suffered from the kings of England, their agents, and the English barons born in Ireland. After having driven us by violence from our dwellings, from our fields and our ancestral possessions—after having forced us to flee to the mountains, the bogs, the woods, and caves to save our lives—they cease not to harass us here even, but strive to expel us altogether from the country, that they may gain possession of it in its entire extent. They have destroyed all the written laws by which we were formerly governed. The better to compass our ruin, they have left us without laws. . . . It is the opinion of all their laymen, and of many of their ecclesiastics, that there is no more sin in killing an Irishman than in killing a dog. They all maintain that they have the right to take from us our lands and our goods."

In the second period of English rule in Ireland, to the war of races was added a war of religion, in which the "Irish enemy" became the "Popish idolater." To kill an Irishman was no sin, and to exterminate

idolatrous superstition was a mission imposed by Heaven upon the chosen people to whom the pure faith of Christ had been revealed.

Then began the series of butcheries, devastations, famines, exterminations, and exiles which have not yet come to an end. The horrors of these three centuries have not been written ; they can never be rightly told, or even imagined. Ireland was not only conquered, but confiscated.

Elizabeth confiscated 600,000 acres of land in Munster after the revolt of the Earl of Desmond ; her successor, James I., confiscated a million acres in Ulster. Charles I. confiscated 240,000 acres in Connaught, and would have confiscated the whole province had he been able to obtain possession of it. Under the Commonwealth 7,708,237 acres were confiscated. William of Orange confiscated 1,060,000 acres. And in these confiscations we have not included the lands of the Church, which were all turned over to the Establishment. The atrocity of England's Irish wars is without a parallel in the history of Christian nations. Women and children were murdered in cold blood ; priests were burned to death ; churches were pillaged and set on fire ; towns were sacked and the inhabitants put to the sword ; men and youths were put on shipboard, carried into mid-ocean, and deliberately thrown into the sea. Others were sold as slaves in the Barbadoes.



Whatever could serve as food for man was destroyed, that famine might make way with all who escaped the sword. Spenser, the poet, who visited Ireland after the revolt of the Earl of Desmond, in the reign of Elizabeth, has left us a description of the condition of that province as he saw it: "Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came, creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves; they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them; yea, and one another soon after, inasmuch as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of water-cresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able long to continue therewithal; that in short space there were none almost left; and a most populous and plentiful country suddenly left void of man and beast."\*

Lord Gray, one of Elizabeth's lieutenants, declared towards the end of her life that "little was left in Ireland for her Majesty to reign over but carcasses and ashes."

Cromwell's wars were even more cruel, and left Ireland in a condition, if possible, more wretched still. Half the people had perished; and the survivors were dying of hunger in the bogs and glens

\* "A View of the State of Ireland," by Edmund Spenser.

in which they had sought refuge from the fury of the troopers. Wolves prowled around the gates of Dublin, and wolf-hunting and priest-hunting became important and lucrative occupations. But it is needless to dwell longer upon this painful subject. Let us remark, however, that it would be unjust to hold Elizabeth or Cromwell responsible for these cruelties. They but executed the will of the English people, who still cherish their memories and justify these outrages. No English ruler ever feared being called to account for harshness or tyranny in dealing with Ireland. The public opinion of the nation considered the extirpation of the Irish as a work to be done, and applauded whoever helped forward its consummation. This much we may affirm on the authority of Protestant witnesses. "The favorite object of the Irish governors," says Leland, "and of the English Parliament was the utter extirpation of all the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland."

"It is evident," says Warner, "from the Lords-Justices' last letter to the Lieutenant, that they hoped for an extirpation, not of the mere Irish only, but of all the English families that were Roman Catholics."

The feeling against the Irish was even stronger than against the Church, so that the English seemed to feel a kind of pleasure in the adherence of the Celtic population to the old faith, since it widened the chasm between the two races. They really made

no serious efforts to convert the Irish to Protestantism. They neglected to provide them with instructors capable of making themselves understood. They put forth no Protestant translation of the Bible in the Irish language, but contented themselves with setting up a hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and rectors whose lives were often scandalous, and who, as Macaulay says, did nothing, and for doing nothing were paid out of the spoils of a Church loved and revered by the people. Some justification for the extermination of the Irish race would be found in the fact that those who perished were only papists. War, famine, confiscation, and exile had, by the close of the seventeenth century, either destroyed or impoverished the native and Catholic population of Ireland. The land was almost exclusively in the hands of Protestants, who had also taken possession of all the cathedrals, churches, and monasteries which had escaped destruction. The Catholics, reduced to beggary, were driven from the towns and, as far as possible, from the English settlements into the bleak and barren hills of Connaught. In many instances the confiscated lands had been given to Englishmen or Scotchmen, with the express stipulation that no Irish Catholic should be employed by them, even as a common laborer. In this extremity the Irish people were helpless. Every line along which it was possible to advance to a better state of things

was cut off. Their natural leaders had been driven into exile or reduced to abject poverty ; their spiritual guides had been murdered or banished ; or if any had escaped their pitiless persecutors, a price was set upon their heads, and they led the lives of outlaws, unable to administer the sacraments even to the dying, except by stealth.

All their institutions of learning had been destroyed ; and England permitted no instruction except in the English tongue—which the Irish neither spoke nor were willing to speak—and in Protestant schools, from which she knew the Catholics were necessarily shut out. They not only had nothing, but were in a condition in which it was impossible that they should acquire anything. Indeed, the little security which was still left them to drag out a miserable existence was found precisely in their utter helplessness and wretchedness. They could no longer be plundered, for they had nothing ; they could not be butchered in battle, for they were powerless and without weapons ; and so their persecutors paused, not, as the poet says, to listen to their sad lament, but from sheer contempt and indifference, thinking it no longer worth while to take notice of their hapless victims.

Three-fourths of the population of the island were nevertheless still Irish Catholics ; and in spite of the persistent efforts to drive them all beyond the

Shannon, the moment the violence of persecution abated large numbers showed themselves in other parts of the country, especially in the province of Munster. It was at this time, and to meet any danger that might arise from the mingling of the Irish Catholics with the Protestant colonists, that the Penal Code was enacted, by which the entire population that still held to the ancient faith was deprived of all rights and reduced to the condition of helots and pariahs. This Code, the most inhuman ever contrived by the perverted ingenuity of man, was the work of the Irish Parliament, which, it is almost needless to say, represented only the Protestants of Ireland. Violence had done its work ; the Catholic Irish had been reduced to a condition as wretched as it is possible for man to suffer and live ; and now the form of justice and the semblance of law are invoked to make this condition perpetual. Suddenly, and for the first time, the Protestants of Ireland seem animated with religious zeal for the conversion of the Catholics. The extermination of the Irish race was abandoned as hopeless ; and, indeed, there seemed to be no good ground for believing that a people who had survived the wars, famines, and exiles by which Ireland had been drained of its population during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could be extirpated. Nothing remained, therefore, but to convert them. This was the pre-

text with which men sought to hide the monstrous iniquity of the penal laws. All bishops and monks were ordered to quit Ireland before the 1st of May, 1698, under pain of imprisonment and transportation; and, in case they should return, they were to suffer death. Heavy fines were imposed upon all who harbored or concealed the proscribed ecclesiastics; and rewards were offered for their discovery or apprehension. Care was taken at the same time to exclude all foreign priests. By thus cutting off from Ireland the fountain-source of orders and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, it was confidently expected that in a few years the Catholic priesthood would cease to exist there, and that the people, left without priests or sacraments, would have no alternative but to become Protestants. Every exterior sign of Catholic worship was suppressed, and it was tolerated only as a hidden cult, whose ceremonies were performed with bated breath, clandestinely in cabins and unfrequented places. Whatever appealed to the heart or the imagination was condemned. The steeple that pointed to heaven; the bell whose religious tones thrilled with accents of a world of peace; the cross that told of the divinity that is in suffering and sorrow; the pilgrimages in which the people gathered to cherish sacred memories and to do homage to worthy deeds and noble lives, were all proscribed. And even the poor huts in which it

was possible to offer the Holy Sacrifice were carefully watched by the officers of the law, as to-day, in the great cities, places of infamy are put under the surveillance of the police.

Having suppressed the hierarchy and shorn the Catholic religion of its splendor, the rulers of Ireland next proceeded to adopt measures by which every imaginable inducement to apostasy was held out both to the clergy and the laity. An annual pension, first of twenty, then of thirty, and finally of forty pounds sterling, was offered to all priests who should abandon their religion. Whether or not they accepted this bribe was held to be of small importance, as their ranks were rapidly thinned by death, and precautions had been taken that the vacancies should not be refilled.

The Catholic people were placed in a position like that of the Forty Martyrs, who were exposed naked on the frozen lake, surrounded by warm baths and comfortable houses, which they could enter by renouncing their faith. The deepest and holiest instincts of human nature were appealed to against the most sacred convictions which man is capable of holding. If the father wished to educate his child, schools abounded, but he could enter them only by abandoning his religion. He was not, indeed, forced to send his children to these Protestant schools, but it was made impossible for him to



send them to any other. His tyrants went farther. They spared no pains to make it impossible that an Irish Catholic should learn anything even by stealth. All Catholic schoolmasters were banished from Ireland, and, in case of return, were to suffer death.

The law made express provision for the money necessary to defray the expenses of transporting these obnoxious persons. Nay, it went yet farther. There were schools on the continent of Europe to which a few Irish children might possibly find their way. This danger was foreseen and met. An act was passed prohibiting Catholics from sending their children across the Channel without special permission, and the magistrates were authorized to demand at any time that parents should produce their children before them. Beyond this it was not possible to go. All that human enactments can do to degrade the mind of a whole people to a state of brutish ignorance was done. And let us remark that this applied not to the Irish only, but to all Catholics who spoke the English language. The English Government took from them every opportunity of knowledge, made it criminal for them to know anything; and then they were denounced by English writers almost universally as the foes of learning and as lovers of ignorance. We know of no harder or more cruel fate in all history, nor of a more striking example of the injustice of the world towards the Church,

Even here in the United States we Catholics are still suffering the consequences of this unparalleled infamy. But we have hardly entered on the subject of the Penal Laws : we are as yet on the threshold.

The enforced ignorance of the Irish Catholics was but a preparation for innumerable other legal outrages. From all the honorable careers of life they were mercilessly shut out—from the army, the navy, the magistracy, and the civil service. That a Catholic was not permitted to become an educator we have already seen. As little was he allowed to perform the functions of barrister, attorney, or solicitor. He could neither vote nor be elected to office. Shut out from all public life, from every liberal profession, disfranchised, ignorant, despised, was anything else needed to make the Irish Catholic the most wretched of men? His land had been confiscated, he had been robbed ; he was a beggar ; but might he not hope gradually to lift himself out of the degradation of his poverty? To regain ownership of the soil was out of the question. He was disqualified by law, which, however, permitted him to become a tenant—not to do him a favor, but solely for the benefit of the landlord, to whose arbitrary will he was made a slave. This is but half the truth. The iniquity of the law mistrusted the rectitude of human nature even in an Irish landlord. He was therefore com-

pelled to be unjust to his tenant ; to give him but short leases ; to force him to pay at least two-thirds of the value of the produce of his farm ; to punish him for improving his land by augmenting the rent ; and, lest there should be any doubt as to the seriousness of these barbarous enactments, a premium was offered for the discovery of instances of their violation in favor of Catholic tenants. The landlord was not allowed to be just, but he was free to be as heartless and inhuman as he pleased. His tenants had no rights, they belonged to a despised race, they professed an idolatrous religion, and their extermination had been the cherished policy of the English Government for six hundred years. If there was no hope here for the Irish Catholic, might he not, with better prospects, turn to commercial or industrial pursuits?

Without, for the present, taking a larger view of this question, it will be sufficient to consider the restrictions placed upon Catholics in this matter. Commerce and manufacture were controlled by municipal and trading corporations of which no Irish Catholic could be a member. This of itself, at a time when monopoly and privilege were everywhere recognized, gave to Protestants the entire business of the country.

Prohibitory laws were therefore not needed. But no security could lull to rest the fierce spirit of the persecuting Protestant oligarchy. A Catholic could

not acquire real estate ; he could not even rent land, except on ruinous terms ; he could not exercise a liberal profession or fill a public office ; he was unable to engage in commerce or manufacture ; he had no political rights, no protection from the law ; and, to make all this doubly bitter, his masters were at once the enemies of his race and his religion. This, one would think, ought to have been enough to satisfy the worst of tyrants. But it is of the nature of tyranny that the more it oppresses, the more it feels the necessity of inflicting new wrongs upon its victims. Every motive that incites men to activity and labor had been taken from the Catholics, and yet their oppressors, with the cowardice which naturally belongs to evil-doers, were still fearful lest some of them might, by chance or good fortune, acquire wealth enough to lift them above the immediate necessities of life. A universal threat was therefore held over all who possessed anything. A Catholic was not allowed to own a horse worth more than five pounds ; any Protestant in the kingdom might take the best he had by paying him that sum. Whenever it was deemed necessary to call out the militia, the law declared all horses belonging to Catholics subject to seizure ; and twenty shillings a day for the maintenance of each troop was levied on the papists of the country. Whenever property was destroyed, the law assumed that the Catholics were the offenders,

and they were forced to indemnify the owners for their loss. They were taxed for the support of the government, in which they were not allowed to take part and from which they received no protection ; for the maintenance of the Established Church, in which they did not believe and which was already rich with the spoils of the Catholic Church.

No Catholic was permitted to marry a Protestant ; and the priest assisting at such marriage was punished with death. No Catholic could be a guardian ; and to the agonies of death this new pain was added : that the dying father foresaw that his children would be committed to Protestants, to be brought up in a religious faith which had been the unclean source of all the ills that had befallen him and his country. The law held out a bribe to Catholic children to induce them to betray their parents, and put a premium on apostasy.

This inhuman Code was not framed at one time, nor was there found in its enactments any system or unity of purpose, other than that which is derived from the hate of the persecutor for his victim. To this blind fury whatever helped to crush and degrade the Catholic people of Ireland seemed just.

Though it seems almost incredible, it is nevertheless certain, that the execution of these laws was worse than the laws themselves. The whole intent of the legislators being directed to the extermination

or perversion of the Irish Catholics, the fullest license was granted to the caprice and cruelty of individuals. The Catholic had no protection. If he sought to defend himself, he was forced to employ a Protestant lawyer, who could bring his case only before a Protestant judge, who was obliged to submit it to a Protestant jury. In these circumstances recourse to the law was worse than useless. The great landed proprietors were accustomed to deal out justice with a high hand. They had prisons in their castles, into which, for or without cause, they threw their helpless dependents; and whenever these outrageous proceedings were complained of, the grand juries threw out the indictments. To horsewhip or beat the poor Catholics was a frequent mode of correction, and they were even deliberately murdered without any fear of punishment. This we have upon the authority of Arthur Young, whose testimony is certainly above suspicion; and he adds that the violation of their wives and daughters was not considered an offence. If the great lord met them on the road, his servants were ordered to turn their wagons and carts into the ditch to make room for his carriage; and if the unfortunate wretches dared complain, they were answered with the lash. For a Catholic to bring suit against his Protestant persecutor would have been at once most absurd and most dangerous.

The religious fanaticism which had inspired the Penal Code lost its honesty and earnestness amid these frightful excesses. The tyrant is degraded with his victim, and crimes committed in the name of religion, if they begin in sincerity, end in hypocrisy. Even the poor honesty of blind zeal vanishes, and selfishness and hate alone remain. This is the sad spectacle which Ireland presents to our view after the first fury of persecution had spent itself. The dominant class grew indifferent to all religion, and, having ignominiously failed to make any impression on the faith of the Catholics, connived at their worship.

But as zeal grew cold, self-interest became more intense. So long as the Catholics remained in poverty and helplessness no notice was taken of them ; but the moment they acquired anything which could excite the cupidity of a Protestant, the law was appealed to against them. The priest, who, according to the Code, incurred the penalty of transportation or hanging for saying Mass, could violate this article with impunity, provided he possessed nothing which might serve as a motive for denouncing him. The laws against Catholic worship were kept upon the statute-book, chiefly because they served as an ever-ready and convenient pretext for robbing Catholics. Another end, too, scarcely less important, was thereby gained. The Catholics, even when left in peace,



lived in continual fear, knowing that any chance spark would be sufficient to light the flames of persecution. In this way it was hoped that the martyr-spirit in them would give place to the spirit of the slave; and this hope was not altogether delusive. Since there was a kind of security in remaining in abject poverty, in lurking in secret places, in speaking only with bated breath, and in showing the most cringing servility in the presence of their masters, the Catholics came by degrees to look upon this servile condition as their normal state, and hardly dared even hope for a better. We may remark that this is another instance in which the Catholic Church is held responsible for the work of Protestants. Protestant England has enslaved Catholic Ireland; has for centuries put forth the most heartless and cunningly-devised efforts to extinguish in the Irish Catholics every noble and free aspiration of the human heart; and then she has turned round and appealed to the world, with the cant which is twin-born with hypocrisy, to bear witness that Ireland is in fetters because the Catholic Church is opposed to liberty; and the world, in whose eyes success is ever the highest and the best, has smiled approval.

Is it, then, possible that six hundred years of hereditary bondage, of outlawry, of want and oppression, should produce no evil effect upon the character of a people, however nobly endowed by God? Are

we to expect industry when every motive that incites men to labor is absent? How can he who is forbidden to possess anything be provident? Or is it not natural that the hopelessly wretched should grow desperate, reckless of their deeds or their consequences?

Great misfortunes, like great successes, try men as nothing else can. In the lowest depths of misery we are apt to forget that there is a lower deep. For ourselves, the more we study the history of the Irish people, and compare their character with the wrongs which they have suffered, the more wonderful does it seem to us that they should have remained superior to fate. If they have not wholly escaped the evil influences of the worst of all tyrannies, nothing, at least, has been able to destroy their purity, their hopefulness, their trust in God, and belief in the final triumph of right. They are, in our eyes, the highest example of the supremacy of the soul, of the invincible power of faith; the most striking proof of a divine Providence that watches over the destiny of nations. It will not be thought out of place to quote here the words of a Protestant historian who, in his old age, seems to regret the impartiality and generous love of unpopular truth which characterized his earlier manhood.

"Such," says Mr. Bancroft, "was the Ireland of the Irish—a conquered people, whom the victors delighted to trample upon and did not fear to pro-

voke. Their industry within the kingdom was prohibited or repressed by law, and then they were calumniated as naturally idle. Their savings could not be invested on equal terms in trade, manufactures, or real property, and they were called improvident. The gates of learning were shut on them, and they were derided as ignorant. In the midst of privations they were cheerful. Suffering for generations under acts which offered bribes to treachery, their integrity was not debauched. No son rose against his father, no friend betrayed his friend. Fidelity to their religion—to which afflictions made them cling more closely—chastity, and respect for the ties of family remained characteristics of the down-trodden race.” \*

So long as there was question of oppressing and impoverishing the Irish Catholics the Protestant Ascendancy received the hearty approval and efficient co-operation of the English Government. But there was danger lest these Irish Protestants, possessing a country of the richest natural resources, should come to compete with England in the markets of the world.

There are few countries in the world so fertile as Ireland. About one-half of the island consists of a fat soil, with a chalky sub-soil, which is the very best of soils. The richness and beauty of her meadows were celebrated by Orosius as early as the fifth cen-

\* *History of the United States*, vol. v. chap. iv. p. 73.

tury. The climate is milder than that of England ; the scenery more varied and lovely. The frequent rains clothe the fields with perpetual verdure. From her wild mountains gush numerous rivers, which, as they flow into the sea, form the safest and most capacious harbors, while in their rapid course they develop a water-power, available for purposes of manufacture, unsurpassed in the world. This water-power of Ireland has been estimated by Sir Robert Kane at three and a half millions of horse-power. The country abounds in iron ore, and three centuries ago Irish iron was exported to England. Geologists have counted in the island no less than seven immense beds of both anthracite and bituminous coal ; and of turf, the heating power of which is half that of coal, the supply is inexhaustible. The soil is most favorable to the growth of the beet-root, from which such large quantities of sugar are made in France and Belgium. The flax and hemp, as is well known, are of the best quality, and the fineness of Irish wool has long been celebrated. The rivers and lakes abound in trout and salmon and pike ; and the fisheries alone, if properly managed, might become the source of enormous wealth. Were it not that, in the designs of Providence, the most cunningly-devised plans, when conceived in iniquity, defeat themselves, the English statesmen would have perceived that the most efficacious means for bringing about the result

at which the policy of England, in its relations with Ireland, had always aimed, would have been the encouragement of Irish commerce and manufactures. No benefit could have accrued, from such a course, to the Catholic population, which was not only disfranchised, but rendered incapable by law of acquiring or possessing wealth.

Had the descendants of the Scotch and English settlers planted by Elizabeth, James, and Cromwell been permitted or encouraged to develop the natural resources of the country, they would not only have grown strong, but opportunities of remunerative labor and hope of gain would have attracted new settlers, and in this way Ireland would have been filled with Protestants, whose loyalty would have been firmly secured by this wise and conciliatory policy. The agitations which rendered some amelioration of the condition of the Catholics unavoidable as part of a general system would not have taken place ; the strength of the Protestant Ascendancy would have grown with increasing numbers and wealth ; exile would have remained the only refuge of the Catholic remnant from misery and death ; and Ireland to-day might be as Protestant as was Ulster in the reign of Charles I.

But no motive of religion or humanity has ever influenced the policy of the English Government when there was question of English interests. The desire of acquiring wealth or the necessity of defending

one's possessions are, in the opinion of Englishmen, the only sufficient reasons for going to war.

“Even in dreams to the chink of his pence  
This huckster put down war.”

It was not to be expected that Ireland, with her harbors and rivers, her fertile fields and unnumbered flocks, would be permitted to tempt capital to her shores or to stimulate enterprise. Nothing seemed more shocking to the English traders and manufacturers than the thought of having to compete in the home and foreign markets with the products of Irish industry. It was deemed intolerable that this nest of popery, this den of ignorance and corruption, should be dealt with in the same manner as England. The Parliament was therefore called upon to “make the Irish remember that they were conquered.”

England had assisted the Protestants of Ireland to crush the Catholics; she had for this purpose placed at their service her treasures and her armies; and now the Irish Protestants were required, in evidence of their gratitude, to sacrifice the commercial and industrial interests of their country to English jealousy.

At the end of the seventeenth century the manufacture of woollen stuffs had attained to considerable importance in the southern provinces of Ireland. The superiority of the Irish broadcloths, blankets,

and friezes was recognized, and it was therefore resolved that they should no longer be manufactured. The Lords and Commons, in 1698, called upon William III. to protect the interests of English merchants ; and his majesty replied in the well known words : "I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture of Ireland." Accordingly, an export duty of four shillings in the pound was laid on all broadcloths carried out of Ireland, and half as much on kerseys, flannels, and friezes. This, in fact, was equivalent to a prohibition, and the ruin of the Irish woollen manufactures which followed was not an unforeseen, but the directly intended, consequence of this measure. The linen manufacture, since there were at the time no rival English interests, was opposed only in an indirect way by offering large bounties for the making of linen in the Highlands of Scotland, bounties on the exportation of English linen, and by imposing a tax of 30 per cent. on all foreign linens, with which most of the Irish linens were classed.

Still other measures were needed for the complete destruction of Irish commerce and industry. The *Navigation Laws* forbade all direct trade between Ireland and the British colonies ; so that all produce intended for Ireland had first to be unloaded in an English port. The Irish were not allowed to build or keep at sea a single ship. "Of all the excellent tim-



ber," said Dean Swift in 1727, "cut down within these fifty or sixty years, it can hardly be said that the nation hath received the benefit of one valuable house to dwell in, or one ship to trade with." The forests of Ireland, which so greatly added to the beauty of the country, were felled and carried to England to build ships which were to bring the wealth of the world into English ports. Even the Irish fishery "must be with men and boats from England "

By these and similar measures commercial and industrial Ireland was blotted out of existence, and even the possibility of her ever entering into competition with England for the trade of the world disappeared. The unjust legislation by which Irish industry was repressed was not inspired by religious passion nor directed against the Catholic population. Their condition was already so wretched and helpless that it would have been difficult to discover anything by which it could have been made worse. "The aboriginal inhabitants," says Macaulay—"more than five-sixths of the population—had no more interest in the matter than the swine or the poultry ; or, if they had an interest, it was for their interest that the caste which domineered over them should not be emancipated from all external control. They were no more represented in the Parliament which sat at Dublin than in the Parliament which sat at Westminster.

They had less to dread from legislation at Westminster than from legislation at Dublin. . . . The most acrimonious English Whig did not feel towards them that intense antipathy, compounded of hatred, fear, and scorn, with which they were regarded by the Cromwellian who dwelt among them.”\*

Molyneux, who at this time came forward as the champion of Ireland and of liberty, demanded nothing for the Irish Catholics but a more cruel slavery; and Dean Swift, who gained much popularity for his advocacy of Irish rights, declared he would as soon think of consulting the swine as the aboriginal inhabitants of the island.

Indisputable as the fact is that the Irish Catholics had no direct interest in the contest in which the commerce and industry of their country were destroyed, the consequences of the iniquitous policy of England proved nevertheless most disastrous to them. Manual labor was the only work which they were permitted to do, and there now remained for them nothing but the tillage of the soil, either as tenants-at-will or common laborers. Ireland was to supply England with beef and butter, and the work of exterminating the Irish Catholics was not to be pushed further than the exigencies of successful cattle-grazing might demand. Society was constituted in the simplest manner. There were but two classes—the

\* *History of England*, vol. v. p. 45.

possessors of the soil and the tillers of the soil ; the lord and the peasant ; the master and the slave ; the Protestant and the Catholic ; the rich man and the beggar. There were but two kinds of human dwellings—the castle, with its high walls and splendid park, and the mud cabin, in which it was impossible that there should be anything but filth and rags. The multitude lived for a few men, by whom they were valued as their horses or their dogs, but not treated so humanly. A contrast more absolute has never existed, even in the despotisms of Asia. The picture is revolting ; it cannot be contemplated even in imagination without loathing, or thought of with any composure. It is a blot on humanity, an infamy which no glory and no services can condone. Ireland was in the hands of the worst class of men whom history has ever made odious—an aristocracy which hated the land from which it derived its titles, despised the people from whom it received its wealth, shirked the duties and responsibilities imposed by its privileges, and used its power only to oppress and impoverish the nation. The Irish people were thus under the weight of a double tyranny—that of England and that of their lords ; and the fiend best knows which was the worst.

The Southern planter felt a kind of interest in his slaves—they were his property ; an Irish landlord felt no interest of any kind in the people by

whom he was surrounded. It was important that they should remain slaves, beggars, and outcasts; that the chasm which separated him from them should in no way be diminished; but for the rest he gave no thought whether they starved or murdered one another or were drowned in the deep. He spent most of his time in England, living in luxury, leaving his estates to the care of brutal agents, who pleased him the better the more cruel and grinding their exactions were. English in origin and sympathy, Protestant in religion, there was no bond of union between him and his people. He cared neither for the country nor its inhabitants. He was unwilling to risk capital even to improve his own lands; for he had no faith in the permanence of a social and political state which was possible only because it outraged the holiest and best instincts of man's nature. When it was proposed to take steps to drain the bogs and bring the waste lands of Ireland under cultivation, the Protestant party strenuously opposed the measure, on the ground that this would be an encouragement to popery. Nothing, therefore, was done either by the Government or the landlords to improve the soil or to introduce better methods of tillage. The great proprietors, living in London, spending their time and fortune in a life of pleasure and display, let out their estates to land speculators, who were generally capitalists. These

speculators sublet them, in lots of several hundred or a thousand acres, to a class of persons called middlemen, who divided them up into portions of five, ten, or twenty acres, and rented them to the poor Catholics. By neither the proprietors nor the speculators nor the middlemen was any risk of capital made. The peasant was therefore compelled to rent his little plot of ground, bare of everything—he found on it neither dwelling nor stabling, nor implements of any kind. He had nothing himself, and those whose interest it would have been to advance him money were unwilling to risk a penny. All that he could do was to put up a mud-cabin, and to get a wretched spade with which to begin work. If by honest labor he could have looked forward to an improvement in his condition, his lot would not have been altogether comfortless. The pioneers who in this new world have led the army of civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific began life almost as poor as an Irish peasant of the seventeenth or the eighteenth century; but for them no law of man reversing nature's first law made labor sterile. How was the poor Irish Catholic, with but a few acres of ground, and without the necessary means for proper cultivation, to pay the exorbitant rent which was to support the landlord, the speculator, and the middleman?—for upon him alone rested the burden of maintaining all three in a life of ease and luxury. The soil refuses to satisfy

the unreasonable demands made upon it; the tenant finds that he is unable to pay his rent; and without the least ceremony he and his wife and children are turned upon the road. England having destroyed the commerce and manufactures of Ireland, he can find nothing to do, and, if he is unwilling to see his wife and children starve, he must beg. And even beggary, with its frightful degradations, affords little relief; for the rich spurn him and the poor have nothing to give. Few words are needed to bring home to us the significance of this state of affairs. We have only to recall the tragedy which was enacted under our eyes in 1849. In that one year *fifty thousand families* were turned upon the road to die; *two hundred thousand human beings*, without shelter, without bread, sent up their piteous moan of hunger and despair to God from the midst of a Christian nation, the richest in the world. The terrible famine of 1847 and 1848, which was only an unusually startling outbreak of an evil that has long been chronic in Ireland, was not caused by excess of population. The country, if its resources were properly developed, is capable of supporting a far larger number of inhabitants than it has ever had. There were but eight millions of people in Ireland in 1847, and it has been conclusively proven that under favorable circumstances fifteen millions would not be an excessive population. In fact, in the so-called years of

scarcity, when the people were dying by thousands of starvation, the country produced enough to feed its inhabitants ; but they had to sell their wheat, barley, and oats to pay the rent, and, the potato crop having failed, they had nothing to eat. In 1846 and 1847 enormous quantities of grain and live-stock were exported from Ireland to England, and yet the people of Ireland were starving. During the four years of famine Ireland exported four quarters of wheat for every quarter imported. The food was in the country, but it had to be sent to England to pay the rent of the landlords. The people were starving, but that was no concern of these noble gentlemen, so long as their rent was paid. The cry of hunger has rarely been hushed in Ireland. All through the eighteenth century the people died of starvation. In 1727 Boulter, the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, declared that thousands of families were driven from their homes by hunger ; and Dean Swift has given us an account of the condition in his time of even the better class of tenants. "The families," he says, "of farmers who pay great rents live in filth and nastiness, upon buttermilk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house as convenient as an English hog-sty to receive them." In 1734 the famous Bishop Berkeley asked this question : "Is there on the face of the earth any Christian and civilized people so destitute of everything as the mass



of the people of Ireland?" In 1741 the cemeteries were too small for the burial of the multitudes who died of hunger.

In 1778, while we were struggling for freedom from English tyranny, Lord Nugent declared, in the House of Commons, that the people of Ireland were suffering all the destitution and misery which it is possible to human nature to endure. Nine-tenths of them earned no more than fourpence a day, and had no nourishment but potatoes and water. In 1817 the fever, brought on by hunger, attacked one million five hundred thousand persons—nearly half of the entire population of the country. In 1825, 1826, 1830, 1832, 1838, 1846 to 1850, and finally in 1860, 1861, and 1862, the melancholy cry of multitudes dying of hunger was heard throughout the land. In 1843 Thackeray, travelling in Ireland, declared that "men were suffering and starving by millions"; and a little later we know from the most accurate statistics that more than a million of the Irish people died of hunger within a period of two years. The history of Ireland is, we are persuaded, the sublimest and the saddest of all histories. It has never been written, and the grandest of themes awaits the creative power that will give it immortal life on the pictured page. It will be written in the English language, and it will link the English name and tongue for all time with the greatest social crime

which one people ever committed against another. In another article we hope, by the aid of the faint and glimmering light that shines so fitfully in this blackness, to be able to trace the doubtful and devious way along which this providential race seems to be slowly rising into the promise of a better day. For the present we shall conclude with a quotation from De Beaumont, whose careful and conscientious studies on the *Social, Political, and Religious Condition of Ireland* we recommend to all who are interested in this subject:

"I have seen," he wrote in 1835, "the Indian in his forests and the negro in chains, and I thought, in beholding their pitiable state, that I saw the extreme of human misery; but I did not then know the fate of poor Ireland. Like the Indian, the Irishman is poor and naked; but he lives, unlike the savage, in the midst of a society which revels in luxury, and adores wealth. Like the Indian, he is deprived of every material comfort which human industry and the commerce of nations procure; but, unlike him, he is surrounded by fellow-creatures who are enjoying all that he is forbidden even to hope for. In the midst of his greatest misery the Indian retains a kind of independence which is not without its charm and its dignity. Destitute as he is, and famishing, he is yet free in his wilderness; and the consciousness of this freedom softens the

hardships of life. The Irishman suffers the same destitution without having the same liberty. He is subject to laws, has all kinds of fetters; he dies of hunger, and is under rule; deplorable condition, which combines all the evils of civilization with the horrors known elsewhere only to the savage! Doubtless the Irishman who has shaken off his chains, and still has hope, is less to be pitied than the negro slave. Nevertheless he has to-day neither the liberty of the savage nor the bread of the slave." \*

## II.

The present condition of a people is the latest phase of a life that has run through centuries, in all the events of which there may be traced the relation of cause and effect, and whose continuity has never been interrupted, though at times the current may seem to leave its channel, or even to disappear. The past never dies, but with each succeeding moment receives a fuller existence, survives as a curse or a blessing. The passion which urges the human mind back to ages more and more remote, until the gathering darkness shuts out even the faintest glimmer of light, is not mere curiosity, nor even the inborn craving for knowledge; rather is it the consciousness

\* *L'Irlande: Sociale, Politique et Religieuse.* Par Gustave de Beaumont, Membre de l'Institut. Tom. i. p. 222.

that those ancient times and far-off deeds still live in us, mould us, and shape our ends. We were with Adam when he plucked and ate the forbidden fruit, and that his act should work in us yet, like a taint in the blood, seems to be a postulate of reason not less than a truth of tradition or revelation. The cherishing of great names, the clinging to noble memories, the use of poetry, music, sculpture, painting, architecture, or any art, to give form and vividness to glories, heroisms, martyrdoms, are but the expression of this consciousness that the present is only the fuller and more living past. No vanity, much less scorn or hate, should prompt any one to lift into the light the glory or the shame of a people's history. As we tread reverently on the ground where human passions have contended for the mastery, we should approach with religious awe the facts which have made the world what it is.

There are many persons, who certainly have no prejudices against the Irish people, many true and loyal Irishmen even, who strongly object to the prominence given to the sorrows and sufferings of Ireland. They would have us forget the past and turn, with a countenance fresh and hopeful as that of youth, to the future. Sydney Smith, full of English prepossessions but an honest lover of liberty, who labored as earnestly and fearlessly as any man of his generation in behalf of the wronged and defence-

less, could not restrain his impatience when he thought of the fondness with which Irishmen cling to old memories and sacred associations. In his opinion the object of all government is roast mutton, potatoes, claret, a stout constable, an honest justice, a clear highway, and a free chapel. "What trash," he exclaimed, "to be bawling in the streets about the Green Isle, the Isle of the Ocean, the bold anthem of *Erin go bragh!* A far better anthem would be, Erin go bread and cheese, Erin go cabins that will keep out the rain, Erin go pantaloons without holes in them."

This may be very well, but we are persuaded that there is not an abuse or an evil in Ireland to-day which has not its roots in the remote past, or which can be understood or remedied without a knowledge of Irish history.

The bold anthem of *Erin go bragh*, which so provoked Sydney Smith, is the thread that leads us through the labyrinth. It is because the Irish are not English that England is neither able nor willing to treat them justly; and if she has rendered herself guilty of the greatest social crime in all history, it is because she has clung for centuries with terrible obstinacy to a policy which left the people of Ireland no alternative between denationalization and extermination. When in England the national spirit dominated and absorbed the religious spirit, the

Irish, who had so long maintained their separate nationality, adhered with invincible firmness to the old faith. This was imputed to them as a crime, and became the pretext for still more grievous persecutions. If they were resolved to be Irish and Catholic, England was not less resolved that they should be outlaws and beggars. They were to have no bread or potatoes, or cabins that would keep out the rain, so long as they persisted in singing the bold anthem and acknowledging the supremacy of the pope. The history of Ireland is in great part the history of her wrongs; for a long time to come, doubtless, it will be a history of suffering; and if those who write of her find that they are placing before their readers pictures of death, exile, persecution, beggary, famine, desolation, violence, oppression, and of every form of human misery, they are but describing the state to which her conquerors have reduced her.

But there are special reasons for dwelling upon the wrongs of Ireland. For three hundred years the Irish people themselves and their faith have been held responsible, wherever the English language is spoken, for the crimes of England. The backwardness of Irish industry, and the seeming want of energy of the people in improving their condition, are habitually imputed by statesmen and public instructors to a peculiar indolence and recklessness in

the Celtic race, fostered and encouraged by what is supposed to be the necessary influence of the Catholic religion.

The Irish are probably not more Celtic than the French, who assuredly are not excelled in thrift and industry by any other people. There is no country more Catholic than *Belgiûm*, nor is there anywhere a more prosperous or laborious people. Irishmen themselves, it is universally admitted, are hard workers in England, in the United States, in Canada, in Australia—wherever, in a word, the motives which incite men to labor are not taken from them; and yet the popular prejudice on this subject is so flattering to Anglo-Saxon and Protestant pride that it remains in the public mind like a superstition, which no amount of evidence can affect. We have attempted to trace some of the causes to which the poverty and misery of Ireland must be attributed, and we shall now continue the investigation. During the three centuries immediately following the Conquest the country was wasted by wars, massacres, and feuds, carried on by the two armed nations, which fiercely contended for the possession of the soil. The Anglo-Norman colony, entrenched within the Pale, and receiving constant supplies of men and money from the mother-country, formed a kind of standing army, ever ready to invade and lay waste the territories still held by the native population.



The Irish people, in self-defence, and also with the hope of driving the invader from their shores, turned their whole attention to war. All the pursuits of peace were forgotten, and the island became a camp of soldiers, who, when not battling with the common enemy, turned their swords against one another. In such a state of society no progress was possible. Then came three centuries of religious wars to add more savage fierceness to the war of races. Under Elizabeth, James I., Cromwell, and William of Orange the whole country was confiscated. The Catholics were driven from their lands, hunted down, their churches and monasteries were burned or turned over to Protestants, their priests were martyred or exiled, their schools closed, their teachers banished, their nobles impoverished; and to make this state of things perpetual the Penal Code was enacted. To this point there was complete harmony between the home Government and the English colony in Ireland. But England has rarely poured out her treasure or her blood for other than selfish and mercenary motives. She therefore demanded, as the price of her assistance in crushing the Irish Catholics, that the commerce and industry of Ireland should be sacrificed to her own interests. The House of Commons declared the importation of Irish cattle a public nuisance. They were then slaughtered and salted, but the Government refused to per-

mit the sale of the meat. The hides were tanned. The importation of leather was forbidden. The Irish Protestants began to export their wool ; England refused to buy it. They began to manufacture it ; an export duty, equivalent to prohibition, was put on all Irish woollen goods. They grew flax and made linens ; England put a bounty on Scotch and English linens, and levied a duty on Irish linens. Ireland was not allowed to build or own a ship—her forests were felled and the timber sent to England. The English colonies were forbidden to trade with her ; even the fisheries were carried on with English boats manned by Englishmen. By these and similar measures Irish commerce and industry were destroyed. Nothing remained for the people to do but to till the soil. In this lay the only hope of escaping starvation. But they no longer owned the land ; it was in the hands of an alien aristocracy, English in origin and sympathy, Protestant in religion. The Catholic people, without civil existence, were at the mercy of an oligarchy by whom they were both hated and despised. These nobles owed their titles, wealth, and power to the violence of conquest, and, instead of seeking to heal the wounds, they were resolved to keep them open. In France and in England the Northmen were gradually fused with the original population. They lost their language, customs, almost the memory of their cradle-land. Even in Ire-

land a considerable portion of the Norman conquerors became Irish—*Hibernis hiberniores*. But this partial assimilation of the two races was effected in spite of England, who made use of strong measures both to prevent and punish this degeneracy, as it was termed. Had the union between the Irish and the Normans not been prevented by this violent and interested policy, a homogeneous people would have been formed in Ireland as in England, and the frightful wrongs and crimes of the last seven hundred years would not have been committed.

But the interests of England demanded that Ireland should be kept weak and helpless by internal discord; and she therefore used every means to prevent the fusion of the two races. The "Irish enemy," ever ready to break in upon the settlements of the Pale, was the surest warrant of the loyalty of the English colony to the mother-country, whose assistance might at any moment become essential to its very existence. The native population, on the other hand, was held in check by the foreigner encamped in the land. Had the Irish and the English in Ireland united, they would have had little trouble in throwing off the yoke of England. It was all-important, therefore, that they should remain distinct and inimical races. All intercourse between them was forbidden. Their intermarriage was made high treason. It was a crime for an Englishman to speak

Irish, or for an Irishman to speak English. The ancient laws and customs of the Irish were destroyed, and they were denied the benefits of English law. As yet the English and the Irish professed the same religious faith; but now even this powerful bond of union was broken. Enemies on earth, they looked to no common hope beyond this life. Three centuries of persecution and outrage followed, during which the Irish Catholics were reduced to such a state of misery and beggary that the only thing which remained in common between them and their tyrants was hate.

Here we have come upon the well-spring of all the bitter waters that have deluged Ireland. The country is owned and governed by a few men who have never loved the country and have always hated the people. Throughout the rest of Europe, even in the worst times, the interests of the lords and the peasants were to some extent identical. They were one in race and religion, rendered mutual services, gloried in a common country, and shared their miseries. The noble spent at least a part of the year on his estates, surrounded by his dependants. Kind offices were interchanged. The great lady visited the peasant woman in her sickness, and the humanities of life were not ignored. Elsewhere in Europe the great land-owners, whether lay or ecclesiastical, were, with rare exceptions, kind to the poor, indulgent to

their debtors, willing to encourage industry, to advance capital for the improvement of the land, and thus to promote their own interests by promoting those of their tenants. The privileged classes were not wholly independent of the people. If they were not restrained from wrong-doing by love, they were often held in check by a salutary fear.

But nothing of all this was found in Ireland, where the landlords were in the unfortunate position of having nothing to fear and nothing to hope from the people. They lacked all the essential conditions of a native aristocracy. Their titles were Irish, but all their interests and sympathies were English. They were the hired servants of England, and they were not paid to work for the good of Ireland. They drew their revenues from a country to which they rendered no service ; they were supported by the labors of the people whom they oppressed and hated ; and they rarely saw the land from which they derived their wealth and titles, but lived in England, where they found a more congenial society, and were not afflicted by the sight of sufferings and miseries of which they knew themselves to be the authors. If the people, maddened by oppression or hunger, revolted, the Irish landlords were not disturbed ; for an English army was at hand to crush the rebellion, which was never attributed to its true cause, but to the supposed insubordination and lawlessness of the

Irish character. In England there existed a middle class, which bridged over the chasm that separated the nobles from the peasants, and which rendered the aristocracy liberal and progressive by opening its ranks to superior merit wherever found ; but in Ireland there were only two classes of society, divided the one from the other as by a wall of brass. The authority of the Protestant oligarchy over the Catholic population was absolute, and they contracted the vices by which the exercise of uncontrolled power is always punished. To the narrowness and ignorance of a rural gentry were added the brutality and coarseness of tyrants. The social organization prevented the infusion of new blood which had saved the English aristocracy from decay and impotence, and the general stagnation of political and commercial life in Ireland had the effect of helping on the degeneracy of the ruling caste. Everything, in a word, tended to make the Irish landlords the worst aristocracy with which a nation was ever cursed ; and, by the most cruel of fates, this worst of all aristocracies was made the sole arbiter of the destinies of the Irish people, of whose pitiable condition under this rule we have already given some account.

We turn now to consider the causes which have brought a certain measure of relief to the people of Ireland ; and we must seek for them, not in the goodwill or sense of justice of Irish or English Protes-



tants, but in circumstances which took from them the power of continuing without some mitigation a policy which, if ruinous to the Irish people, was also full of peril to England.

It is pleasant to us, as Americans, to know that the voice which proclaimed our freedom and independence was heard in Ireland, as it has since been heard throughout the earth, rousing the nations to high thoughts of liberty, ringing as the loud battle-cry of wronged and oppressed peoples. The great discussions which the struggle of the American colonies awoke in the British Parliament, and in which the very spirit of liberty spoke from the lips of the sublimest orators, sent a thrill of hope through Irish hearts, while the Declaration of Independence filled their oppressors with dismay. In 1776 we declared our separate existence, and in 1778 already some of the most odious features of the Penal Code were abolished. "A voice from America," said Flood, "shouted to Liberty." Henceforward Catholics were permitted to take long leases, though not to possess in fee simple; the son, by turning Protestant, was no longer permitted to rob his father, and the laws of inheritance which prevented the accumulation of property in the hands of Catholics were abrogated. This was little enough, indeed, but it was of inestimable value, for it marked the turning-point in the history of Ireland. A beginning had been made, a breach had



been opened in the enemy's citadel. But this was not all that the American Revolution did for Ireland.

The sympathies of the Presbyterians of the North went out to their brethren who were struggling on the other side of the Atlantic. They also had grievances compared with which those of the colonies were slight ; their cause was identical, and the success of the Americans would be a victory for Ireland ; if England triumphed beyond the seas, there would be no hope for those who, being nearer, were held with a more certain grasp. Hence, in spite of the bitter hate which in Ireland separated the Protestants from the Catholics, they were drawn together by a common interest and sympathy in the cause of American independence. England's wars, both in Europe and in her transatlantic colonies, were a constant drain upon her resources, and it became necessary to supply the armies in America with the troops which were kept in Ireland to hold that country in subjection. General Howe asked that Irish papists should not be sent as recruits to him, for they would desert to the enemy. The best men were therefore picked from the English regiments and sent to America ; Ireland was denuded of troops ; the defences of her harbors were in ruins ; and she was exposed to the attacks of privateers. Something had to be done, and Parliament agreed to allow the Irish militia to be called out. As an inducement to Catholics to

enlist, they were promised indulgences in the exercise of their religion, but this promise aroused Protestant bigotry, ever ready to break forth. The plan was abandoned, and the defence of the country was committed to the Volunteers.

In the meanwhile Burgoyne had surrendered to the Americans at Saratoga, France had entered into alliance with the colonies, and French and American privateers began to swarm in the Irish Channel. The English Parliament, now thoroughly alarmed, and eager to make peace with the rebels, passed an act renouncing the right of taxing the colonies, and even offered seats in the House of Commons to their representatives. These concessions, which came too late to propitiate the Americans, served only to embolden the Irish in their demands for the redress of their grievances. The Americans were rebels, and were treated with the greatest indulgence; the Irish were loyal, and were still held in the vilest bondage. This was intolerable. To add to the distress, one of the periodical visitations of famine which have marked English rule in Ireland fell upon the country, and the highways were filled with crowds of half-naked and starving people.

Thirty thousand merchants and mechanics in Dublin were living on alms; the taxes could not be collected, and in the general collapse of trade the customs yielded almost nothing. The country was

unprotected, and there was no money in the treasury with which to raise an army. Nothing remained in this extremity but to allow the Volunteers to assemble; for the summer was at hand, and every day the privateers might be expected to appear in the Channel. Company after company was organized, and in a very short time large bodies of men were in arms. The Catholics also took advantage of the general excitement. If the Protestants were in arms, why should they remain defenceless?

Never before had there been such an opportunity of extorting from England the measures of relief which she would never willingly consent to grant. The threatening danger, however, had no effect upon the British Parliament.

The Irish Parliament met in 1779, and the patriots, strong in the support of the Volunteers who lined the streets of Dublin, demanded free trade. The city was in an uproar; a mob paraded before the Parliament House, and with threats called upon the members to redress the wrongs of Ireland. Cannon were trailed round the statue of King William, with the inscription, "Free trade or this," and on the flags were emblazoned menacing mottoes—"The Volunteers of Ireland," "Fifty thousand of us ready to die for our country."

"Talk not to me of peace," exclaimed Hussey Burgh, one of the leading patriots. "Ireland is not

at peace ; it is smothered war. England has sown her laws as dragon's teeth, and they have sprung up as armed men." All Ireland was aroused. The Irish, said Burke in the English House of Commons, had learned that justice was to be had from England only when demanded at the point of the sword. They were now in arms ; their cause was just ; and they would have redress or end the connection between the two countries. The obnoxious laws restricting trade were repealed, and in the greatest haste the news was sent over to Ireland to calm the tempest that was brewing there.

The effect went even beyond expectation. Dublin was illuminated, congratulatory addresses were sent over to England, and people imagined that Ireland's millennium had arrived. But the consequences of centuries of crime and oppression do not disappear as by the enchanter's wand ; and one of the evils of tyranny is the curse it leaves after it has ceased to exist. In the wildness of their joy the people exaggerated the boon which they had wrenched from England ; the sober second thought turned their attention to what still remained to be done.

In 1780 Grattan brought forward the famous resolution which declared that "the king, with the consent of the Parliament of Ireland, was alone competent to enact laws to bind Ireland." The time could not have been more opportune. The American

colonies were in full revolt; Spain and France were assisting them; England had been forced into war with Holland, and her Indian Empire was threatening to take advantage of her distress to rebel. In the midst of so many wars and dangers it would have been madness to have provoked Ireland to armed resistance, and Grattan felt that the hour had come when the Irish people should stand forth as one of the nations of the earth; when all differences of race and creed might be merged into a common patriotism, and Celt and Saxon, Catholic and Protestant, present an unbroken front to the English tyrant. "The Penal Code," he said, "is the shell in which the Protestant power has been hatched. It has become a bird. It must burst the shell or perish in it. Indulgence to Catholics cannot injure the Protestant religion."

The Volunteers were, with few exceptions, Protestants, and their attitude of defiance made the English Government willing to place the Catholics against them as a counterpoise; and it therefore offered no opposition to measures tending to relieve them of their disabilities. But, under Grattan's influence, the Volunteers themselves pronounced in favor of the Catholics by passing the famous Dungannon resolution: "That we [the Volunteers] hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion to be equally sacred in others as in ourselves; that we rejoice in

the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects ; and that we conceive these measures to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland."

In February, 1782, Grattan again brought forward a motion to declare the independence of the Irish Legislature, and again it was thrown out. The Duggan resolution was then introduced, and it was proposed to abolish all distinctions between Protestants and Catholics. But to this the most serious objections were raised, and it was found necessary to make concessions to Protestant bigotry. The Catholics were permitted to acquire freehold property, to buy and sell, bequeath and inherit ; but the penal laws which bore upon their religion, and their right to educate their children at home or abroad, as well as those which excluded them from political life, were left on the statute-book. Fanaticism was stronger than patriotism, and the enthusiastic love of liberty was again found to be compatible with the love of persecution and oppression. But this injustice in no way dampened the ardor of the Catholics for the national independence ; and when, on the 16th of April, 1782, Grattan moved a Declaration of Rights, inspired probably by our own Declaration of Independence, he was greeted with as wild a tumult of applause by the Catholics as by his Protestant

countrymen. "I found Ireland," he said, "on her knees. I watched over her with an eternal solicitude. I have traced her progress from injuries to arms, and from arms to liberty. Spirit of Swift, spirit of Molyneux, your genius has prevailed. Ireland is now a nation. In that new character I hail her, and, bowing to her august presence, I say, *Esto perpetua!*"

The overwhelming popular enthusiasm bore everything with it, and opposition was useless. "It is no longer," wrote the Duke of Portland, the viceroy, "the Parliament of Ireland that is to be managed or attended to; it is the whole of this country."

In England the Whigs, who were in power, felt how hopeless would be any efforts to stem the torrent, and they therefore yielded with grace. Fox admitted that Ireland had a right to distrust British legislation, "because it had hitherto been employed only to oppress and distress her." Ireland had been wronged, and it was but just that concessions should now be made to her. The day of deliverance had come, and, amidst an outburst of universal enthusiasm, Ireland's independence was proclaimed.

The Catholics were the first to feel the benefits of this victory. The two Relief Bills introduced into Parliament in their favor were carried. They were permitted to open schools and educate their own children; their stables were no longer subject to in-



spection, or their horses above the value of five pounds liable to be seized by the Government or taken from them by Protestant informers ; and their right to freedom of religious worship was fully recognized. They recovered, in a word, their civil rights ; but the law still excluded them from any participation in the political life of the country, and they were still forbidden to possess arms. Nevertheless, another step towards Catholic emancipation had been taken. Two other laws, beneficial to all classes of citizens, but especially favorable to the poor and oppressed Catholics, date from this time : the Habeas Corpus Act was granted to Ireland, and the tenure of judges was placed on the English level.

Unfortunately, the social condition of the country was so deplorable that this improvement in the laws conferred few or no benefits upon the impoverished and down-trodden people. But at least there was some gain ; for if good laws do not necessarily make a people prosperous, bad laws necessarily keep them in misery. The landed gentry and Protestant clergy continued without shame to neglect all the duties which they owed to their tenants, whose wretchedness increased as the fortunes of Ireland seemed to rise. To maintain the Volunteers the rents were raised, and the poor peasants, already sinking beneath an intolerable burden, were yet

more heavily laden. The proprietors of the soil spent their time in riot and debauch while the people were starving. They were the magistrates and at the same time the most notorious violators of the law. "The justices of the peace," says Arthur Young, "are the very worst class in the kingdom."

The clergy of the Established Church were little better. Like the landlords, they were generally absentees, and employed agents to raise their tithes, in the North from the Presbyterians, and in other parts of the island from the Catholics. "As the absentee landlord," says Froude, "had his middleman, the absentee incumbent had his tithe-farmer and tithe-proctor—perhaps of all the carrion who were preying on the carcase of the Irish peasantry the vilest and most accursed. As the century waned and life grew more extravagant, the tithe-proctor, like his neighbors, grew more grasping and avaricious. He exacted from the peasants the full pound of flesh. His trade was dangerous, and therefore he required to be highly paid. He handed to his employer perhaps half what he collected. He fleeced the flock and he fleeced their shepherd." "The use of the tithe-farmer," said Grattan, "is to get from the parishioners what the clergyman would be ashamed to demand, and to enable the clergyman to absent himself from duty. His livelihood is

by extortion. He is a wolf left by the shepherd to take care of the flock in his absence." \*

In the midst of the general excitement the Catholic peasants grew restless under this horrible system of organized plunder and extortion. They banded together and took an oath to pay only a specified sum to the clergyman or his agent. The movement spread, and occasional acts of violence were committed. All Munster was organized, and a regular war with the tithe-proctors was begun. In the popular fury crimes were perpetrated and the innocent were often made to suffer with the guilty. Yet so glaring were the wrongs and so frightful the abuses from which the peasants were suffering that they everywhere met with sympathy. The true cause of these disorders was social and not political. Misery, and not partisan zeal, had driven the Catholics to take up arms. The cry for bread of hungry women and children resounded louder in their ears than the shouts of the patriots. They were without food or raiment, and in despair they sought to wreak vengeance upon the inhuman tyrants who had reduced them to starvation. Even Fitzgibbon, afterwards Lord Clare, was forced to admit that the Munster peasants were in a state of oppression, abject poverty, and misery not to be equalled in the world,

\* *The English in Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 453.

and that the landlords and their agents were responsible for the degradation of these unfortunate beings.

Ireland was still a prey to agitations, hopes, and sufferings when the French Revolution of 1789 burst upon Europe. The cry of Liberty, equality, fraternity sounded as a revelation to the struggling patriots. Hitherto they had contended for freedom, in the English and feudal sense, as a privilege and a concession; they now demanded it as an imprescriptible right of man. The American Declaration had indeed proclaimed that all men were free and equal, or of right ought to be; but this was merely a pretty phrase, a graceful preamble, in a charter which consecrated slavery and inequality. In America there were no privileged classes, and the people had not groaned beneath the tyranny of heartless and effete aristocracies; the evils of which their leaders complained, compared with those which weighed down the European populations, were slight, almost imaginary. But in France Liberty and Equality was the fierce and savage yell of men who hated the whole social order as it existed around them, and who, indeed, had no reason to love it. The spirit of feudalism was dead, and its lifeless form remained to impest the earth. The nobles, sunk in debauch and sloth, continued their exactions, upheld their privileges, and yet rendered no service to the state. Corruption, extravagance, mal-

administration, infidelity, and licentiousness pervaded the whole social system. France was prostrate with the foot of a harlot on her neck, and the people were starving. Little wonder, when the torch was applied, that the lurid glare of burning thrones and altars, the crash of falling palaces and cathedrals, should affright and strike dumb the nations of the earth—for God's judgment was there; little wonder that Ireland, sitting by the melancholy sea, chained and weeping, should lift her head when the God of the patient and the humble was shattering the whitened sepulchres which enshrined the world's rottenness.

In Belfast the taking of the Bastile was celebrated by processions and banquets amid the wildest enthusiasm, and the name of Mirabeau called forth the most deafening applause. The eyes of Ireland were fastened on France; the cause of the Revolution was believed to be that of all oppressed peoples who seek to break the bonds of slavery. "Right or wrong," wrote an Irish patriot, "success to the French! They are fighting our battles, and, if they fail, adieu to liberty in Ireland for one century." \* Even the manners and phraseology of the Revolution became popular in Ireland. The Dublin Volunteers were called the National Guard, the liberty-cap was substituted for the harp, and Irishmen saluted one another with the title of citizen.

\* *Tone's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 205.

Out of this French enthusiasm grew the Society of "United Irishmen," which soon superseded the Volunteers. The United Irishmen made no concealment of their revolutionary principles. They demanded a radical reform in the administration of Ireland, and threatened, if this was denied, to break the bond which held them united with England. They openly proclaimed their intention of stamping out "the vile and odious aristocracy," which was an insuperable obstacle to the progress of the Irish people ; and to accomplish this they invited the French to invade Ireland. The landlords, they said, show no mercy ; they deserve to receive none.

However little sympathy the Catholics might feel with men who entertained such violent opinions, they were their natural allies ; and the English Government, following its old policy of doing what is right only under compulsion, hastened to make concessions. From June, 1792, Catholics were admitted as barristers ; they were allowed to keep more than two apprentices ; and the prohibition of their marriage with Protestants was withdrawn. In 1793, when France had declared war against England, still further concessions were made. The penalties for non-attendance at Protestant worship were abolished. "On the eve of a desperate war," said Sir Lawrence Parsons in the House of Commons, "it was unsafe to maintain any longer the principles of en-

tire exclusion." The Catholics were admitted to the franchise, but were not made eligible to Parliament ; they were at the same time declared capable of holding offices, civil and military, and places of trust, without taking the oath or receiving the sacrament. This is the third emancipation of the Catholics of Ireland. The American Revolution brought about the first, and the independence of the Irish Parliament the second.

In the meantime the crimes and excesses of the French Republicans had cooled the zeal of the Irish patriots. The Catholics grew suspicious of leaders who applauded the assassins of priests and the profaners of all sacred things. A reaction had set in, and the English Government seized the opportunity to order the people to lay down their arms ; and this order was intentionally executed with such cruelty as to provoke insurrections, which, in the lack of leaders and of any plan of action, were easily suppressed. The agents of the United Irishmen had, however, succeeded in interesting the French Republic in the cause of Ireland, and in December, 1796, General Hoche set sail for Bantry Bay with fifteen thousand men ; but the fleet, scattered by a storm, was unable to effect a landing. In August, 1798, General Humbert disembarked in Killala Bay at the head of fifteen hundred men who had been drawn from the armies of Italy and the Rhine, but



he found the Irish people completely disarmed, and the country in the possession of a powerful English army. He nevertheless pushed forward into the interior of the island, routed an army of four thousand men, and finally, when his force had been reduced to eight hundred, capitulated to Lord Cornwallis at the head of thirty thousand. A third expedition, sent out in the month of September of the same year, met with no better success. The Rebellion of '98 had blazed forth and had been quenched in blood. That it was not unprovoked even Mr. Froude confesses.

“The long era of misgovernment,” he says, “had ripened at last for the harvest. Rarely since the inhabitants of the earth have formed themselves into civilized communities had any country suffered from such a complication of neglect and ill-usage. The Irish people clamored against Government, and their real wrong, from first to last, had been that there was no government over them; that, under changing forms, the universal rule among them for four centuries had been the tyranny of the strong over the weak; that from the catalogue of virtues demanded of those who exercised authority over their fellow-men the word justice had been blotted out. Anarchy had borne its fruits.”\*

During the violence of the conflict, and in the heat

\* *The English in Ireland*, vol. iii. p. 348.

of passion, both the rebels and the British soldiers committed crimes for which no excuse can be offered ; but the horrible and deliberate brutality of the English after the suppression of the outbreak has never been surpassed by them even in Ireland. When at length the appetite for torture, mutilation, and hanging palled, the British ministry resolved to suppress the Irish Parliament. Nothing was to be feared from the people, for their spirit had been crushed ; the lavish expenditure of money in open and shameless bribery overcame the scruples of their Protestant representatives ; and thus, after a struggle of six hundred and thirty-one years (1169-1800), corruption triumphed where every other means had failed. The *Union* was declared to exist ; but Ireland was permitted to retain its name, its institutions, laws, and customs, subject, however, to the pleasure of the imperial Parliament.

The Rebellion of 1803, which accomplished nothing, and that of 1848, which met with no better fate, close the fateful list of Ireland's wars.

Men have never fought in a juster cause, and, had they triumphed, their names would live for ever in the scroll of the world's heroes. They have not bled in vain, if Irishmen will but learn the lesson which their failures teach. Not by arms, but by the force of the holiest of causes, is Ireland to obtain the full redress of her wrongs. They only who are her ene-

mies or who are ignorant of her history would wish to excite her people to rebellion. That England will grant nothing which she thinks herself able to withhold we know ; but these periodical outbreaks have invariably given her an opportunity of strengthening the grasp which political agitation had forced her to relax. Wars which lead only to butcheries are criminal, and they destroy the faith of patriots in their country's triumph ; while defeat brings divisions and feuds among those who had stood shoulder to shoulder on the field of battle.

After the Union Ireland relapsed into a period of lethargic indifference which might have been mistaken for healthful repose. The Protestant ascendancy entered again upon the beaten paths of tyranny and oppression, and the Catholics suffered in silence.

The obstinate bigotry of George III. had prevented Pitt from fulfilling the promise, made at the time of the union of the two kingdoms, to relieve them of their civil disabilities, and the prime minister, whose intentions were honest, withdrew from the cabinet. But this step, however it might exonerate him from further responsibility in the matter, brought no relief to the Catholics ; and as the sad experience of the past had taught them the hopelessness of resorting to violent measures, they entered upon the course of peaceful agitation which, under the wise and skilful direction of O'Connell, compelled the British Parlia-

ment, in April, 1829, to concede to them the rights which had been so long and so cruelly withheld.

"The Duke of Wellington," said Lord Palmerston, "found that he could not carry on the government of the country without yielding the Catholic question, and he immediately surrendered that point"; and George IV. signed the act of Catholic Emancipation with a shudder.

This great victory, important in itself and its immediate results, was yet more important as an evidence of a radical change in the policy henceforward to be followed in seeking redress of Irish grievances.

For seven hundred years England had been busy in efforts to form a government for Ireland, and the result was the most disgraceful failure known in history. For seven hundred years Ireland had rebelled, plotted, invoked foreign aid, in the hope of throwing off the galling yoke; and after centuries of bloodshed she found herself more strongly bound to England. In the presence of this great historical teaching both nations seemed prepared to pause and deliberately to examine their mutual relations, and both seemed to feel that the special objects at which each had been aiming were unattainable. The geographical position of the two countries renders their union inevitable so long as either is able to subjugate and hold the other in the bonds of a common govern-

ment. Had Ireland been in condition to maintain her independence, England, surrounded by enemies, could never have risen to the position which she has held for centuries. The national aspirations for power and dominion could not be realized while Ireland was permitted to retain her separate existence, and her conquest was therefore inevitable the moment England felt herself strong enough to undertake it; nor can the wildest visionary seriously believe that there is the faintest hope that the connection between them will ever be dissolved except in their common ruin. So long as England's power remains, so long will she hold Ireland with the unerring instinct with which a vigorous people clings to its national life; and should England's downfall come, there is no good reason for thinking that it would not be the knell of Ireland's doom. They have the same language, the same fundamental principles of government, the same commercial and political interests; and under these common influences the differences and antagonisms which still exist are likely to become more and more inactive. The English people 'are not without their own grievances, which, in some respects, are more serious than those of the Irish—the consequences of feudalism, which in England has been able to resist more successfully than elsewhere the social movements of modern times. Henceforward Ireland is the natural and ne-

cessary ally of the more liberal and fair-minded portion of the English people, and she will co-operate most efficiently in helping them to bring about the reforms which are so much needed.

For the perfect religious liberty which can exist only after the disestablishment of the Anglican Church England will be indebted to Ireland, whose people have already compelled the British Parliament to admit principles and adopt measures which will inevitably lead to the dissolution of the union between church and state throughout the whole extent of the empire. The Irish land system must be sacrificed as the Irish Church has been sacrificed ; and this will be the first step towards a complete revolution in the system of land tenure throughout Great Britain. The growing influence and increasing number of English Catholics will help greatly to create a more cordial and genuine religious sympathy between the two races of these sister islands ; and this sympathy will be still further strengthened when the Church in England, through the disestablishment and disintegration of Anglicanism, shall have gained a position and power which will give to her special weight in forming public opinion. As the community of interests of the two countries becomes more manifest, political parties will cease to be influenced by national or religious prejudice, and will be constituted upon principles which relate to the social

interests of the people. England has already confessed the radical error of her Irish policy, and her leading statesmen have admitted that the cause of its failure lay in its viciousness—in the fact that it wantonly violated the rights and interests of the people because they belonged to a different race and held a different religious faith. Her legislation was unjust because it was narrow and exclusive—favored a class and a creed, and, in order to favor these, repressed and crushed the national energies. The Government believed, whether truly or falsely, that it could rule Ireland only by fostering divisions and feuds among her people ; and to do this it sought by every means to intensify and embitter the prejudice which separated the English from the Irish, the Protestant from the Catholic. With this view Scotch and English colonies of Protestants were planted in Ireland, and, lest the intercourse and amenities of life should soften the asperity of religious bigotry, the Government took special care to encourage the hatred which kept them aloof from the natives, first by local separations, and afterwards by the social distinctions which arose from the enforced poverty and ignorance of the Catholic population. The American Revolution taught England, if not the iniquity, the folly of this conduct ; and from 1778 to the present day she has been slowly receding from a course in which she had grown old. She has receded unwillingly, too, and



with hesitation, and has thus often increased the discontent which she sought to allay. Nations, like individuals, find that it is hard to recover from inveterate habits of wrong-doing. The wages of sin must be paid ; repentance can save from death, but not from humiliation and punishment. Nor has England repented, but she has entered in the way of penitence ; she has made some reparation, but has not by any means done all that must be done before Ireland can be content. For nearly half a century now—that is, since 1829—there has been, we believe, a sincere desire to govern Ireland fairly, chiefly, no doubt, because English statesmen had come to see that it was not possible to govern her in any other way ; but these good intentions have been thwarted by the constitutional repugnance of the English people to apply strong and efficacious remedies to social disorders. Nowhere else among civilized nations are ancient abuses guarded and protected with such superstitious veneration. Hence the Government thought to satisfy Ireland by half-measures of redress, and these it took so ungraciously that they seemed to be wrung from it, and not conceded with good-will. Men are not grateful for favors which are granted because they can no longer be withheld.

Englishmen still forget that Ireland has the right to be treated by them not merely with justice, but with generous indulgence. So long as the root of the evil

is left untouched little will be accomplished by pruning the branches. Ireland's curse is the system of land tenure, founded on confiscation and organized to perpetuate a fatal antagonism between the proprietors and the tillers of the soil. Irishmen will be disaffected and rebellious so long as the national prosperity is blighted by a state of things which leaves their country in the hands of men who are happy only when they are away from it.

Parliament has passed several land acts, but it would seem that they had been purposely so framed as to produce no good results. That it is possible to change the land system of Ireland radically, without doing injustice to any one, is admitted, and various projects by which this might be done have been laid before Parliament. This is not a question of tenant-rights; it lies far deeper. Nor is there any parity in this respect between England and Ireland. In England the land is owned by the people's natural leaders; in Ireland it is owned by the people's natural enemies. This land question is far more important than any question of Home Rule; and if Parliament will but give a proper solution to this problem, Home Rule will no longer be seriously thought of.

When landlordism vanishes from Ireland, the day of final reconciliation will be at hand. With it will disappear the flibusters, revolutionists, and Fenians, whose disturbing influence in Irish politics is made

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possible by the wrongs which the English Government has not the will or the courage to redress. There are other grievances than the land system, but it will not be difficult to do away with them when the country shall have been given back to the people. With a free press, free speech, and an organized public agitation sustained and increased by the sympathies and interests of the masses of the people of England, it will be found impossible to withhold much longer from Ireland full and complete justice ; and nothing less will satisfy her people.













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